FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY . . . . . PUBLISHED TWICE MONTHLY

PLAY METER

FEBRUARY 1, 1984

Nolan Bushnell reveals Sente System

Bobby Sox and Zapp's –new directions in operating

IAAPA, Incomat Shows

An interview with NAGA

Bally MIDWAY T.M.

FOOTBALL T.M.

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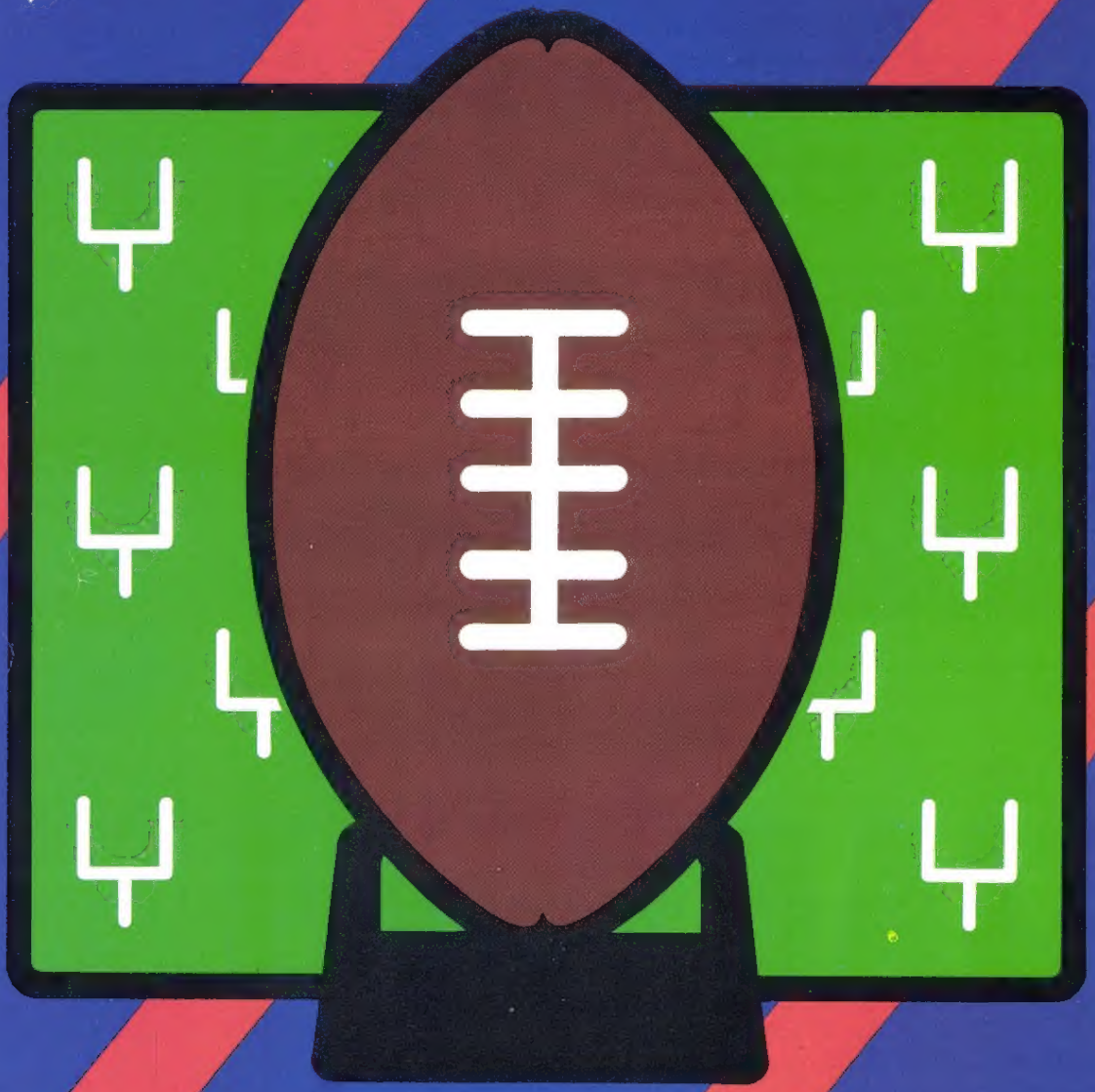

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Arcade Ventures 51

Attracting people into a location is the goal of any arcade. Bill Kurtz reports on a '50s-themed arcade called Bobby Sox on page 51, and Mary Claire Blakeman writes about Zapp's, a new franchising venture from Pizza Time Theatre, on page 62.

Bushnell Debuts System 56

The mysterious brown box was opened at last when Nolan Bushnell marketed his new Sente System to distributors for the first time. Snake Pit is the first game represented in the system. Valerie Cognevich attended the distributor showing and reports on the Sente product and distributors' questions and remarks.

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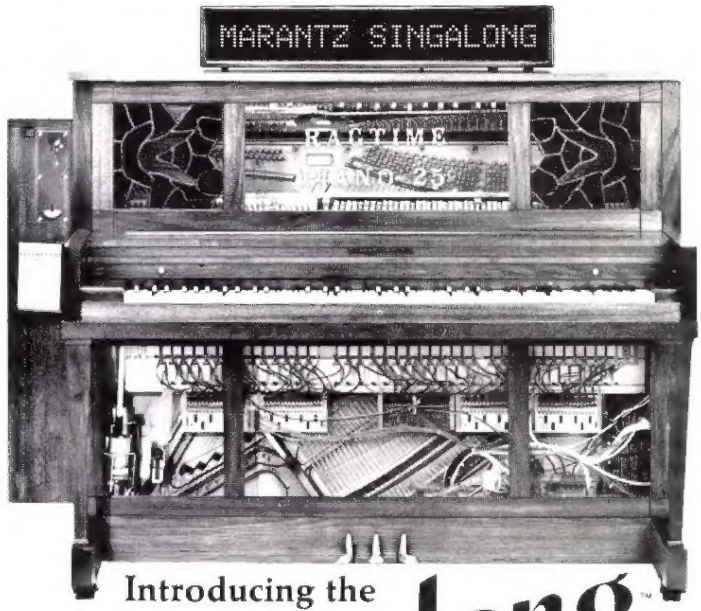
Cover Credit: Bobby Sox is an arcade trying to attract a diverse clientele with its 1950s atmosphere. Flashing neon window signs, a black and white checkered floor, and an old-fashioned soda fountain give a '50s look. See page 51.

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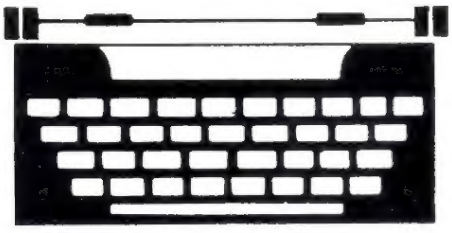
Letters to the editor . . .



Harry Williams' tribute

Editor's Note: Steve Kordek received this letter from Wanda and Kitchy Williams.

To all the friends of Harry Williams:

I want to thank you for your warm expression of love and respect for Harry and me.

My beloved Harry died Sunday, September 11, 1983, at 10:50 p.m. in Desert Hospital. He was given the last rites, and I was blessed enough to be at his side when he gave his life over to God.

Harry was a most marvelous man and my years with him were a rich treasure. I was always aware of his courage, love, and gallantry, but never more so than during his final battle with cancer. He never lost hope; he never gave in to the disease that punished his body with such pain. He was alert and planning for the future. He even continued to work until March. His mind was always creating. He was inventing a new game and had remarked to a friend how much he wished to go home from the hospital to finish his project.

That was the kind of man Harry was—always anxious to give more to people, to somehow make people's lives a little easier, and perhaps, to give joy and peace to a society that desperately needs it. He was a humble man who never sought recognition for himself. Maybe, he never really knew that he would leave a legacy through his work, but I know he has done that and I thank God everyday for the gift of Harry Williams.

My blessing to all of you, and I thank all of you for the great support you have given me.

Wanda Williams and
Kitchy Williams (daughter)

Something on your mind you want to vent? Got a gripe? Full of praise? Have a question? If you have comments on the coin-operated entertainment industry, write to Play Meter. *Our "Letters to the Editor" columns are dedicated to you, the operator/reader.*

All letters must be signed; if requested, only initials will be used or the name withheld from print. Please include return address (although, for the sake of your privacy, addresses will not be printed). All letters are subject to standard editing. Be concise.

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FROM THE BATTLEFRONT... AGMA vs. AOE/PLAYMETER UPDATE

If you are behind in your reading—or perhaps you've been reading the wrong magazine—you might be wondering what's happened lately in the conflict between the Amusement Game Manufacturers Association (AGMA) and *Play Meter*'s Amusement Operators Expo (AOE). This editorial should bring you up to date.

News stories have appeared about *Play Meter* dropping the suit against sponsors of ASI. That is a fact. However, reasons why the suit was dropped and the current status of the suit have not been fully explained.

Following the AMOA Show, we received word from its attorneys that AGMA was keenly interested in discussing a compromise settlement outside of the courtroom—but only if our suit was dropped. Cautious, but hoping for the best, we agreed to *voluntarily* withdraw the suit "without prejudice," meaning we could reinstate the suit at a later date should it become necessary.

Even before AGMA and AOE sponsors reached the bargaining table, AGMA issued a press release in which AGMA officers claimed the withdrawal of our suit vindicated AGMA of the charges brought against them in the lawsuit.

We objected to the contents of that press release and the president of AGMA assured us that he would make every effort to retract the press release.

This was not done and the press release appeared in print in other industry publications and one publication, in particular, even did so without contacting *Play Meter* for confirmation or comments.

When the meeting took place no one from *Play Meter*, nor any of its representatives, was allowed to participate. *Play Meter* then agreed that co-sponsor, Conference Management Corporation, would bargain for a compromise with AGMA.

According to David Cheifetz, president of Conference Management Corporation, at the conclusion of the meeting, AGMA and the Conference Management Corporation respresentative shook hands on a tentative agreement subject to approval of the board members of AGMA and AVMDA.

According to Cheifetz, a counter offer, presented after the board of directors met December 12, "bore absolutely no relationship to the tentative agreement originally negotiated and it was a clear indication of an obvious lack of good faith negotiating on the part of AGMA and AVMDA."

Of course, Conference Management Corporation refused the AGMA offer. Angry that such an unprofessional attempt had been disguised by an offer to bargain in good faith, Conference Management officials vowed to join Play Meter in fighting AGMA with renewed vigor.

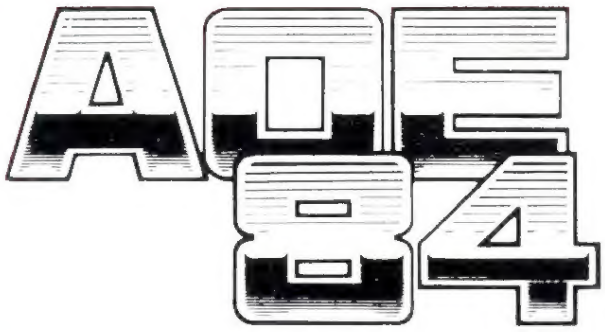
In the spirit of eliminating the confusion of competitive spring shows, *Play Meter* has done everything in its power to reach a fair compromise with AGMA. Despite those efforts, the war between the two factions is escalating. A large number of AGMA members have already dropped their advertising in *Play Meter* which only serves to make our anti-trust suit even stronger.

It is the intention of this editorial to announce to the industry's operators that *Play Meter* is reinstating its lawsuit against AGMA, in an attempt to enjoin its members from staging Amusement Showcase International (ASI). We also intend to fight AGMA by putting on the best AOE show the industry has yet seen. The extensive AOE exhibitor list and largest seminar program ever is proof that many want to be where the operators will be.

We will fight AGMA on every front because we know that an attack against *Play Meter* and AOE '84 is also an attack on the vitality and stability of the nation's operators as a whole. We will fight by standing firmly behind our commitment to better the industry by informing and educating operators and by promoting the respect and good name this industry deserves.

When I was a young boy, my father told me never to back down from a fight, and to fight for what I believe in, but always to do everything possible to avoid a fight. To this day, I have never started a fight, though I have ended quite a few. I am confident, with the help of our readers, we will stand together victorious. Maybe just once, the good guys will finish first!

Ralph C. Lally
Editor and Publisher



AOE operator attendance has increased dramatically

Contrary to what some manufacturers and distributors believe, the operator is not the backbone of the coin-op amusement industry. He is the industry. Manufacturers, distributors, even trade publications flourish or fail according to how they serve the operator. The operator has to bear the brunt of overproduction, wildly fluctuated prices on equipment, faulty product, public antagonism, and hostile legislation. Truly, operators are the industry experts.

That's why the Amusement Operators Expo (AOE) was not called the Amusement Manufacturers Expo or the *Play Meter* Expo. From its inception, it has been a show that responded to operators' needs and relied so heavily on operator support and participation.

Manufacturer support, on the other hand, has been inconsistent. In 1981, after a lackluster attendance at the first AOE, manufacturers were quick to desert the show. Major manufacturers—including the likes of Bally, Stern, Taito, Williams, and Centuri—did not exhibit the second year, although they supported the show initially. And other manufacturers, most notably Atari, didn't think an operator-oriented show in the springtime was worth supporting. But they were all wrong, as is evidenced by their later support.

Attendance increased by 58 percent the year the manufacturers pulled out. So, by the third year, all the second-year exhibition dropouts were back on the AOE bandwagon. And even Atari in 1983 finally came on board.

Operator attendance at the AOE has increased dramatically and steadily. Last year the show boasted of 8,245 confirmed attendees, as compared to a mere 909 in 1980. Strangely, booth sales for AOE '83 were at 500; that's a great change from the 87 booths in 1981 when many of the major manufacturers agreed that a springtime seminar-expo program geared to the operator just wouldn't fly.

Manufacturers' show

Now the manufacturers are staging their own show and, according to a lawsuit filed by AOE show organizers (*Play Meter* magazine and Conference Management Corp.), are actively boycotting the AOE.

But David Pierson, *Play Meter* advertising director and an AOE seminar committeeman, has this to say about the conflict: "If ever the manufacturers wanted to find out for themselves if it is they and not the operators that are the industry, then they couldn't have picked a better fighting ground. Despite the fact that the manufacturers will probably have to contend with a serious antitrust lawsuit, the AOE welcomes the competition. A show for manufacturers, by manufacturers, and of manufacturers is not going to be supported by operators, especially in today's market.

"If the manufacturers' association believes that by setting up a three-day flea market of coin-operated equipment and by offering a side-show of manufacturer and distributor-run seminars it can attract large numbers of operators, it is in for a surprise.

"First of all, operators are not in the mood to attend an exposition geared to help manufacturers further exploit and victimize operators. And manufacturers are hardly in the position they were in two years ago when they could dictate to the operators. Today we have a buyers' market not a sellers' market where the only thing that matters is availability. And the manufacturers' arrogance during this video boom is what has created the overwhelming operator animosity toward manufacturers."

Manufacturers' power

Two years ago manufacturers announced they would boycott the AMOA Show if it were held in Las Vegas. The manufacturers' power plan prevailed because the AMOA Show was moved to New Orleans.

Due to this event and the acknowledged animosity between the AMOA and manufacturers (*Play Meter*, July 1, 1983, p. 10), will the manufacturers attempt to sponsor a second show in the fall and retract support from the AMOA Show? Will the manufacturers say this industry is only big enough for one show? •

GUEST EDITORIAL

Kiddie Rides and Mother Love—Updated

By Louis Boasberg

Until now, American amusement game manufacturers and distributors have sadly neglected a large segment of our population which, if given the opportunity, would patronize coin-operated equipment and be blissfully happy in doing so. The people who were neglected are the children between the ages of 1 and 10, together with their parents and grandparents. Kiddie rides is the equipment that has been neglected for so long.

Long ago when the first kiddie ride appeared in the form of a coin-operated Western horse, it was sensational and several manufacturers went into the ride manufacturing business. Sad to say, local operators in most cities did not take to kiddie rides. They were too busy with what they thought was the "fast buck" equipment and perhaps they were right. So what happened?

Corporations and companies were formed to operate kiddie rides throughout the United States. These groups installed rides in a far-flung operation, but unfortunately they usually hired some local mechanic to care for their rides and allowed locations to have keys to empty the coin boxes.

Like all operations that are not handled with personal and loving care, these neglected kiddie ride operations soon withered away. To make matters worse, the operators, operating by remote control from far away, often got disgusted with the revenue and sold the games to the locations, which kept the rides in stores for years without changes or repairs.

Today, I am happy to say, there are not only American manufacturers of kiddie rides, such as Carousel International Corporation, Miracle Recreation Equipment Company, North American Amusements, Kiddie Rides U.S.A., Amusement Technology, and a few others, but there are also national distributors who represent the very best foreign manufacturers of kiddie rides. Some of these foreign manufacturers have developed the manufacture of rides to a fine art. The British and Dutch especially have built some beautiful, well-made kiddie rides with great quality control.

As everyone knows, a mother, dad, aunt, uncle, grandmother, or grandfather will sacrifice to do everything for his children. We have seen the poorest mother or dad, with only a limited amount of money for shopping, sacrifice and let his child ride the rides to his heart's content. As long as the child is happy, that is all that matters.

In our opinion, the kiddie ride business, which has been sadly neglected in past years, will expand greatly in the future, with the infusion of beautiful, appealing domestic and foreign kiddie rides. We think you will see Kiddie Fun Rooms and kiddie rides in more shopping malls and more large supermarkets and other locations where parents bring their children.

I think each and every operator would be surprised what a well-run Kiddie Room would net in a large shopping center and, who knows, perhaps small Kiddie Rooms or kiddie rides might be a way to open up the large chain fast-food locations such as McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King, Popeye's, etc.

One important thing we have noticed about Kiddie Rooms and Kiddie Arcades is that they do not inspire complaints that they bring a bad element to the premises—all of the kiddie ride patrons are the very young. There are never any complaints from the other tenants of the shopping centers, and the rides do not require policing or even an attendant, except during busy hours.

We can say without question that the managers of the various shopping centers where kiddie rides and Kiddie Rooms are operated have been complimented by the other stores in the shopping malls for not only providing a prime attraction, but providing something that keeps mom and dad on the premises. We sincerely believe that parents also are grateful for the kiddie rides as a built-in escape from the boredom of shopping for their small children.

Most youngsters get bored with shopping. After the first dish of ice cream, slice of pizza, popcorn, or hot dog, they urge mama to go home. But they don't want to leave when they are promised rides on the horse, helicopter, motorboat, auto, train, or fire engine operating in the mall or the supermarket.

To our way of thinking, every shopping mall, every supermarket, and every large department or variety store in the United States should have one to a half dozen kiddie rides to provide extra revenue and a built-in amusement and customer attraction for the kiddies. •

NEWS

BY Mike Shaw

INDUSTRY, MOB TIED IN NEW YORK 'STING' • LICENSE FEES 'OPPRESSIVE,' JUDGE RULES • ATARI WORKERS REJECT UNION • MICHIGAN OPS WANT GAMING, NOT 'GRAY AREAS' • KONAMI ATTACKS U.S. PIRACY • ATARI OPENS CHICAGO DISTRIBUTORSHIP • SALE OF 'MINI VEGAS' HALTED • KIDDIE RIDE MANUFACTURERS JOIN FORCES • NEWS BRIEFS • TOURNAMENTS • M.A.C.H. 3 SOARS ABOVE THE PACK • ATARI OPENS 'HIGHER LEVEL' GAME CENTER • THE GLOB FEATURES A MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

INDUSTRY, MOB TIED IN NEW YORK 'STING'

Video gambling operations in New York received a severe blow November 9 with the arrest of a reputed mob captain and six other men, including a coin-op distributing executive. (See related story, page 47.)

The arrests were the culmination of a 5-month New York City police "sting" operation designed to attract organized crime figures by setting up a retail store, Rainbow Yogurt, that housed a video game room.

"We attempted to set up a legal video parlor...we couldn't get very far without falling into illegal activities," Brooklyn District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman announced at a press conference following the arrests.

Among the men arrested was Richard Bartlett, 34, manager of the New York R.H. Belam office. He was charged with possession of a gambling device and promoting gambling in the second degree, misdemeanors carrying a maximum sentence of one year in prison. Police said Bartlett and an associate, Jack DiCristafalo, located and shared in the profits from illegal gambling devices at Rainbow Yogurt in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn.

Holtzman said Bartlett was introduced to the undercover agents as a video game supplier who could take care of rigging video games so that they would pay off. Allegedly, he had one game doctored with payout devices, then placed it and two slot machines in the back room of Rainbow Yogurt.

Bartlett denied the charges, saying he has been mistakenly connected to the operation through DiCristafalo.

"He is just one of about 900 customers," Bartlett told *Play Meter*. "They found some coin wrappers that had the Belam name on them in his warehouse. The whole thing is just a fishing expedition," Bartlett fumed. "They have nothing."

On October 18 police raided DiCristafalo's employer, Santell Maintenance Ltd., a Brooklyn store which, according to the district attorney's office, "is in the business of converting otherwise legal games into gambling machines." In that raid, police seized 25 games equipped with chutes and hoppers, rigged, police said, to issue "direct payouts." (Hoppers are permitted on some arcade games in New York for the purpose of awarding merchandise.)

Among the games confiscated from Santell were eight video card games, 10 slot machines, and four horse racing videos. Most of the games had no manufacturer identification and their serial numbers had been scratched out, police said.

On October 19, police raided the Belam offices, seizing gaming equipment documents.

Belam officials said they do not sell gaming equipment in the United States. The firm is an exporter of gaming equipment.

In addition to gambling charges, claims of loan sharking—undercover agents arranged a $2,000 loan at 130

District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman announced the arrest of seven men after a 5-month undercover investigation into criminal activities related to slot machine and video game business in Brooklyn. Standing with Holtzman are Captain Terrence Randall, commander of the district attorney's Office Squad, and Robert Winter, chief of the district attorney's Rackets Bureau.

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NEWS

percent annual interest—were leveled against two defendants, Carmine Lombardozzi, a reputed mob captain, and Frank Balsamello, a supermarket manager. They were charged with criminal usury in the first degree and promoting gambling in the second degree. The usury count, a felony, could net each a maximum of 15 years in prison.

Some New York operators expressed concern over the manner in which the district attorney characterized the video game industry there. Inherent in Holtzman's statement is the suggestion that it is impossible to operate a video game center in New York without becoming involved with organized crime.

"The operation was set up to attract potential criminal influence," one operator protested.

"They reached out to the criminals. The criminals did not go to them," another accused.

The Rainbow Yogurt location used in the sting operation was leased from a realty company long suspected to have ties with crime families, another New York operator explained.

"It is unfortunate that the impression given is that a video game parlor anywhere in New York is likely to be controlled by organized crime, when the truth is that any business in that neighborhood is likely to be approached by one of the crime families," he said.

Bartlett, DiCristafalo, and Phillip Santelli of Santell Maintenance appeared in Brooklyn Criminal Court December 12. Their hearings were adjourned until January 11. •

LICENSE FEES 'OPPRESSIVE,' JUDGE RULES

As coin-operators brace themselves for 1984's first round of state and local tax attempts, they can find some inspiration in a recent decision by New Jersey Superior Court Judge Donald Coburn. Ruling on an operators' suit against Union City, Coburn struck down the city's licensing fees, calling them "oppressive and prohibitive and confiscatory."

Dallas distributor Games Galore, in conjunction with Entertainment Enterprises, manufacturer of the Mini Vegas *video card game, gave away a vacation week for two at the Club Baja in Baja, Mexico, to a visitor at their AMOA show booth. Play* Meter's *David Pierson (right) draws the winner's name while E. E.'s Jed Foreman (left) and Games Galore's Ron Markis steady the box of entries. The lucky winner was Dock Ringo, who at the time of the drawing was getting used to his new job as 1984 president of AMOA.*

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Play Meter's Equipment Poll

TOP VIDEOS
Arcade Locations

Fifteen of 33 videos (45%) with a response rate over 10 percent have above average performances.

		Rating		
		Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
	1. *M.A.C.H. 3*/Mylstar	100.0	108.5	—
★	2. *Track & Field*/Konami Centuri	85.5	96.8	—
	3. *Dragon's Lair*/ Cinematronics	74.1	100.0	100.0
	4. *Pole Position*/Atari	69 0	71.3	73.1
	5. *Star Wars*/Atari	67.4	76.1	78.8
★	6. *Elevator Action*/Taito	63.0	68.0	71.8
★	7. *Champion Baseball*/Sega	59.0	63.8	64.9
★	8. *Crystal Castles*/Atari	55.8	61.1	63.6

Provisionally Rated Videos

	Rating		
Provisional Ratings	Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
Astron Belt/Bally/Midway	90.0	—	—
Discs of Tron/Bally	74.7	81.6	89.5
Pole Position 2/Atari	73.6	—	—
Cliff Hanger/Stern	66.6	95.9	—
Donkey Kong 3/Nintendo	64.4	—	—
Motorace U.S.A./Williams	59.1	—	—
Mr. Do!'s Castle/Universal	57.1	—	—

NOVELTIES (non-videos)
Arcade & Street Locations

Twelve of 30 novelties (40%) with a response rate over 10 percent have above average performances.

		Rating		
		Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
★	1. *Skee-Ball*/Skee-Ball	100.0	66.6	85.2
★	2. *Whac-A-Mole*/ Bob's Space Racers	100.0	100.0	74.1
★	3. *Ninja Gun*/ American Arcade	95.4	77.7	—
	4. *Chexx*/ICE	92.1	—	—

Provisionally Rated Novelties

	Rating		
Provisional Ratings	Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
Punchball/Zamperla	133.3	91.6	100.0
High Ball/Norton Co.	118.7	76.6	86.4
Shoot Away/Namco Am.	116.6	60.0	69.4
Bowl/G Manufacturing	110.0	66.6	—
Whirly Bucket/Exidy	100.0	63.9	—
Boom Ball/Meitec	94.4	66.6	90.5
Hot Spot/Bob's Space Racers	87.5	—	—
Happy Feet/Norton Co.	87.5	—	—

Provisionally rated games in each category are above average performing games with a response rate between 10-25 percent

TOP VIDEOS
Street Locations

Ten of 28 videos (36%) with a response rate over 10 percent have above average performances

		Rating		
		Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
★	1. *Dragon's Lair*/ Cinematronics	100.0	100.0	100.0
	2. *Pole Position*/Atari	73.1	100.0	67.7
★	3. *Q*bert*/Mylstar	68.8	—	—
★	4. *Star Wars*/Atari	67.7	91.4	73.1
★	5. *Champion Baseball*/Sega	64.9	60.6	—
	6. *Mr. Do!'s Castle*/Universal	58.6	61.4	70.3

Provisionally Rated Videos

	Rating		
Provisional Ratings	Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
M.A.C.H. 3/Mylstar	111.7	—	—
Pole Position/Atari	85.1	—	—
Track & Field/ Konami/Centuri	79.0	—	—
Elevator Action/Taito	65.0	65.0	68.7

TOP PINBALLS
Arcade & Street Locations

Seven of 18 pinballs (39%) with a response rate over 10 percent have above average performances.

		Rating		
		Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
★	1. *Granny and the Gators*/ Bally	100.0	100.0	92.5
	2. *Firepower II*/Williams	75.5	85.8	72.0
★	3. *Goldball*/Bally	75.0	89.5	72.0
	4. *X's and O's*/Bally	66.6	81.6	100.0

Provisionally Rated Pinballs

	Rating		
Provisional Ratings	Feb. 1	Jan. 15	Dec. 31
Rack 'em Up/Gottlieb	95.2	—	—
Rat Race/Williams	83.3	—	—
Ready, Aim, Fire/Gottlieb	80.9	84.0	—

★ *Conditionally Rated—Weekly average based on less than 50% response rate*

NOTICE: The sole purpose of this survey is to determine on a regular basis the top performing games in the country. Any attempt to use the results of this survey for any other purpose is unauthorized, wrongful, and misleading.

Crossbow™ by Exidy is an adventure shooting game. The player, armed with a crossbow, is escorting a party of characters (men, women, and dwarves, etc.) through various dangerous episodes. The object of the game is to protect these characters from dangers lurking within each level and to remove obstacles impeding their progress, and reach the evil master's dungeon. This is all accomplished by shooting a myriad of colorful targets.

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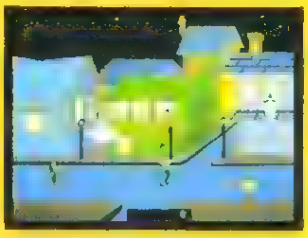
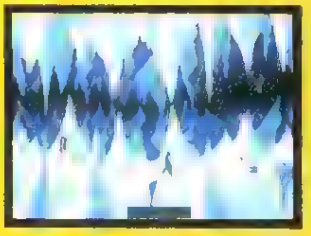
THERE ARE EIGHT LEVELS OR SCENES - PLUS - SURPRISE NINTH LEVEL.

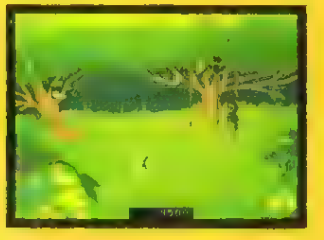
(1) **DESERT** (TARGETS INCLUDE DEADLY SCORPIONS, VULTURES, SNAKES, RABBITS, AND SPIDERS)



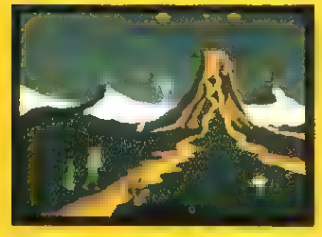
(2) **VILLAGE** (GHOSTS, EVIL MAGICIAN AND HIS FIREBALLS, NASTY TOWN PEOPLE, SWAMP RATS)



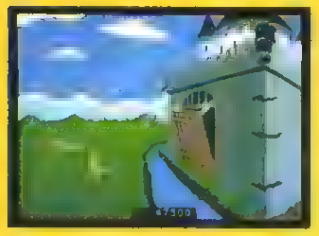
(3) **CAVE** (BATS, FALLING ICICLES, ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN)



(4) **JUNGLE** (MAN-EATING PLANTS, GORILLAS COCONUTS, TOUCANS, ETC.)



(5) **VOLCANO** (SPEWN ROCKS, MOLTEN LAVA ETC.)



(7) **CASTLE EXTERIOR** (GUARD ARCHERS, ARROWS, ALLIGATORS)

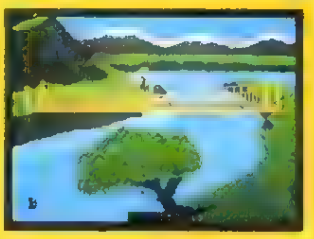
CROSSBOW

Each scene is begun by the player choosing the colored path he wishes his party to follow. If the party survives, the player chooses where to go next by trial and error. The player must learn which colored path leads to each scene's unique element of danger. The adventure ends when all party members are killed.

Points are awarded for each target shot and is based on its difficulty level to be hit, bonus points are given at the end of each level for each surviving party member.

Surviving certain very difficult levels also awards the player with bonus members, increasing the size of his party.

Valuable treasures can be found in some scenes.



(6) **BRIDGE** (ROLLING ROCKS, PTERODACTYL, FISH, FROGS, OWLS)

(8) **CASTLE INTERIOR** (DRAGON, FIREBALL, TRAP DOOR)

DIMENSION:

- **HEIGHT:** 80.00 INCHES
- **WIDTH:** 25.25 INCHES
- **DEPTH:** 35.00 INCHES
- **WEIGHT:** 315.00 POUNDS

OPERATOR OPTIONS:

- **COINS/CREDITS** – FACTORY SET AT TWO COINS PER CREDIT (Adjustable)
- **PARTY SIZE** – TWO, THREE*, FOUR OR FIVE FRIENDS
- **DIFFICULTY** – FOUR LEVELS (Easy, Normal*, Hard, Most Difficult)

*Factory Settings

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The ruling came August 23, some 19 months after Union City decided on a video game fee structure that called for a $200 per game fee for games in locations with three or fewer games and $400 for each additional game. Each operating company also was to have paid a $1,500 "distributor's fee."

There is no question in my mind that the effect of the ordinance is to unfairly and improperly select out a particular industry and attempt to tax it at a rate which is totally unrelated to costs of licensing," Coburn wrote. "This ordinance singles out a particular business and places upon that business a special burden when there is no basis in fact for this type business to bear a special burden."

Coburn's decision came at the behest of Betson Enterprises which filed the suit in conjunction with the North Jersey Amusement Operator Association as one in a series of efforts to stymie oppressive fees forced upon video game operators throughout New Jersey in the winter of 1982.

When the ordinance was voted into effect, Betson's route operations division had 70 games on location in Union City, including 30 in a single arcade. For the arcade alone, Betson's "licensing fee" was $11,400. Instead of paying the fee, Betson officials escrowed a "reasonable" fee of $30 per game with their attorney and filed the suit.

In his judgment, Coburn compared Betson route operations' earnings with the fees and agreed "the $200 per machine fee imposes a tax upon the plaintiff of over 12 percent, almost 13 percent of the average receipts per machine per year."

"Another way of looking at it is if one looks at the value of the machine somewhere between $3,000 and $4,000." Coburn continued. "This tax or license fee is roughly 5 or 6 percent of the value of the entire machine. Even by itself that seems oppressive and prohibitive and confiscatory and it particularly seems so in relationship to the license fee charged to all other businesses in town."

Members of the U.S. Olympic Gymnastic Team crowd around the Konami Century game Track & Field at the Japan Expo '83 at the Los Angeles Convention Center November 25. More than 80,000 attendees viewed exhibits from more than 100 Japanese companies.

According to North Jersey Association President James Cuccio (Cuccio also is president of AMOA of New Jersey), Union City is just one of several favorable rulings operators received from New Jersey courts.

"We have been making a proposal of paying a $25 fee per location," Cuccio said. "If they accept that as fair we don't mind them placing a reasonable restriction on the number of games per location."

Union City has not abandoned its effort to license the video game industry into submission. According to Cuccio, Union City has developed a new ordinance that calls for a $190 fee for the first game on location, $185 for the second, and $180 for the third. It has also reduced its distributor's fee to $1,000, he told *Play Meter*.

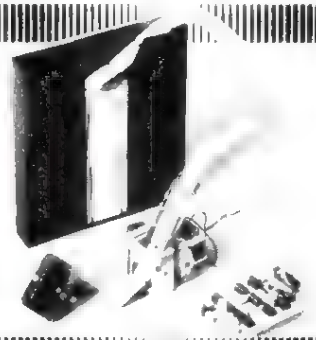
"They are ignoring the intention of the courts," Cuccio said, "but now they are getting a lot of flack from our locations. For many of them, video games are an important source of revenue." •

ATARI WORKERS REJECT UNION

An attempt to organize coin-op production workers at Atari, a first step toward proposed unionization of all Silicon Valley coin-op workers, failed December 5 when Atari's 179-member coin-op production work force voted 5 to 1 to reject unionization.

"The reaction here was that we've had 20 months of haggling, and we're glad it's finally over so we can start the task of rebuilding Atari," said Atari spokesman Bruce Entin. "I think our employees realized that only a healthy company can create jobs, not a union."

Atari opposed the union as an unnecessary third party in the relationship between the company and its employees, Entin said. "Like other



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THE CALENDAR

January 19-21
IMA 84 International Amusement and Vending Trade Fair, Hall 1, Frankfurt exhibition grounds, Germany

February 3—5
Music Operators of Minnesota State Team 8-Ball Tournament, Mankato, MN

February 10-12
South Carolina Coin Operators Association annual convention and trade show, Carolina Inn, 937 Assembly St., Columbia, SC. Telephone: 803/738-0652

February 17—19
Amusement Showcase International, trade show and conference sponsored by the AGMA, Chicago's Expo Center.

February 24—26
Music Operators of Minnesota Annual State Convention, L'Hotel Sofitel, Minneapolis, MN

February 28 - March 2
Amusement Trades Exhibition International (ATE) 40th Show. Grand Hall, Olympia, London. Telephone: 01/228-4107.

March 9—11
Fifth Annual Amusement Operators Expo, O'Hare Expo Center, Chicago. Industry trade show and seminars sponsored by Play Meter magazine and Conference Management.

March 29-31, April 1
SADA '84, Palacio de Congresos de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain. Contact: Interalia, S.A., Diagonal, 474, Barcelona - 6. Telephone (93) 218-58-50.

March 29-31, April 1
1984 FAVA Trade Show, Hyatt Regency Orlando, Grand Cypress Resort, Florida. (904) 878-3134.

April 6-8
Pacific Amusement Operators Show, Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, Calif. For information contact: Terry Cunningham, (415) 325-6691.

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NEWS

Silicon Valley companies, Atari puts a high premium on communicating with its employees," he noted "The union would get in the way of that."

The vote was a defeat for the Glaziers and Glass Workers union which had intensified coin-op worker unionization efforts at Atari when Atari laid off 1,700 workers last February (*Play Meter*, April 1, 1983, p. 15) It was then that 14 workers came to the Glaziers for help in organizing the Atari plant, hoping the union would bring them job security

"Atari was a test case," said union organizer Edward Jones "Although we were defeated, we intend to continue." Jones said he hopes for another election at Atari by early March

He said he has received inquiries from workers at the Exidy plant in Sunnyvale and from workers at other small video game manufacturing companies in the Valley

In a move to resurrect the vote Jones has filed objections with the National Labor Relations Board contending Atari conducted an "illegal" campaign against the union. "Atari threatened its workers with the loss of their basic benefit package," Jones charged. "There was also a lot of personal pressure on workers from their supervisors to vote against the union."

Atari production workers Judy Davis and Delia Hernandez said the company never threatened them with the loss of their benefit package "We were told to make up our own minds, Davis told *Play Meter*. "Most of us never wanted a union to begin with."

Jones admitted workers at Atari had become, at the time of the vote, less apprehensive about their futures "Atari has a new leader (James Morgan replaced Raymond Kassar as chief executive officer in July)," Jones explained "And now the company is promising workers the mistakes of the previous administration won't be repeated

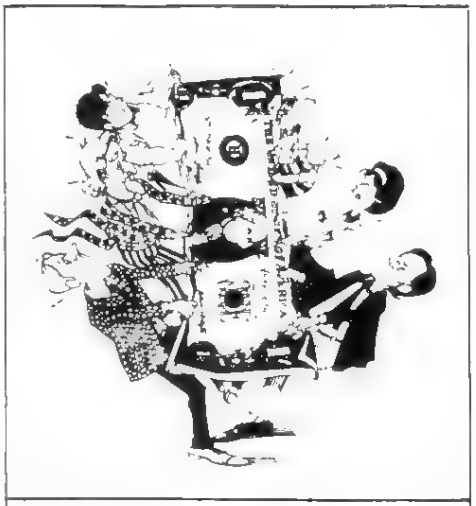
Atari Executive Vice President Dennis Groth led the company battle against the union In a memo to workers last spring he wrote "Atari accepts the responsibility of providing all of its employees with working conditions and pay and benefits that are fair and competitive If you happen to be approached by this union or a

union sympathizer we'd appreciate you telling them that we don't need a union here at Atari." •

MICHIGAN OPS WANT GAMING, NOT 'GRAY AREAS'

In a November 18 vote, the Michigan Coin Machine Operators Association elected to oppose a bill, SB 227 authored by Senator David Holmes of Detroit, that would legalize the operation of "gray area" games for amusement purposes. Instead, the association is backing a measure by Representative Tom Scott that would legalize gambling in both video game and slot machine form.

"We are still endorsing gaming in Michigan," association Secretary/Treasurer John Roszatycki of Bay City said after the vote. "What we don't want is the confusion between gaming



and amusement that would result from the Holmes bill."

SB 227 has already passed the Michigan Senate and awaits the February reconvening of the House to be tested there. SB 227 would eliminate a 15 replay ceiling on coin-op games, as well as strike current language that requires replays to be played off individually. The bill also allows for the operation of games equipped with knock-off meters.

What SB 227 does *not* do is legalize payouts.

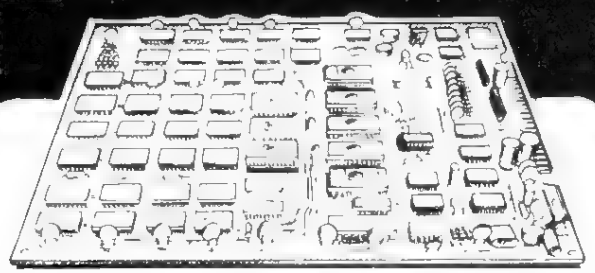
"SB 227 muddies the water as to what is amusement and what is gambling equipment," explained association lobbyist Walt Maner.

"Gaming is going to be here," Roszatycki and Maner agree, and amusement operators want a piece of the gambling pie.

"Legalization of gaming will eliminate about 50 percent of our amusement business," Roszatycki proposed. Without a bill like the one authored by Scott, he added, many Michigan coin game operators will be out of business.

Scott's measure would provide for private operation of gaming equipment in locations that house less than 25 machines. In establishments with more than 25 gaming machines, the state would operate the equipment. About 70 percent of the net take would go to the operator. The bill is undergoing revisions before being intro-

Attention, Video Game Operators...



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duced in the House in hopes the Michigan Congress will put the issue before the state's voters in the 1984 fall elections

Herb Beitel, director of the National Coin Machine Institute, addressed the Michigan association at a policy meeting prior to the November vote He advised the association to clarify its intention not to support SB 227

"Michigan is becoming a microcosm on this issue," he told *Play Meter* "Michigan operators are facing the question of whether or not this industry wants to be in the gambling business" He intimated the passage of either the Holmes bill or the Scott bill will have national impact on the coin-op amusement industry •

KONAMI ATTACKS U.S. PIRACY

At an expense of more than $100,000 Konami conducted a 3-month search for counterfeited versions of its video games in New York City, resulting in piracy charges against five New York firms

Investigators found counterfeit *Time Pilot, Gyruss,* and *Roc 'n Rope* games comprised about 30 percent of the Konami named products on location in New York

On October 28, Konami investigators led New York police on raids of five distributors, L I P D Q., Coin Box, Pintronics, Simon Ho, and LaPoetry Systems, where they seized video games, printed circuit boards, and records of counterfeit activity Subsequently Konami filed suit against the five firms as well as seven locations

According to Konami attorney Curtis Porterfield, four of the distributing firms have acquiesced to preliminary injunctions Only John Kutkowski of LaPoetry Systems (a 'k/a Systems Inc) is fighting the charges

Kutkowski, in an interview with a local TV station, said he made only cabinets for video games However Porterfield said the raids uncovered invoices of sales of printed circuit boards by Kutkowski to customers located nationwide "There were invoices of board sales totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars ' Porterfield said "One invoice was for $28,000 " Kutkowski was unable to be reached for further comment

Suits filed against each of the alleged counterfeiters are still in preliminary stages, but according to Porterfield, Konami has already spent more than $100 000 to investigate and file charges He admitted remedies from the suits will not cover Konami's expenses

"We used to get settlements of $1,000 or $1,500 for each game, which helped to defray legal costs," he said For that payment, the counterfeiter, or location, would get the machine back—minus the illegal boards or parts

But now we can't get that because the games aren't worth that much to them any more," he explained

Some manufacturers answer that dilemma by pressing for criminal charges in piracy cases contending jail sentences that result from criminal convictions are better deterrents to potential counterfeiters

But Porterfield said criminal charges have been difficult to effect, that local U S attorneys (who must file criminal cases) are not impressed with the losses inflicted on large, impersonal companies "They tend not to want to file criminal charges because the only injured party is a manufacturer."

Konami pursues its attack on piracy in the United States, at least in part, as an announcement that the company has arrived in America The Japanese manufacturer opened a stateside office in Torrance, California, last spring (*Play Meter*, June 1, 1983, p 20-22) and plans to forgo licensing games to U S manufacturers and market them here itself Already the company insists licensors share billing with Konami (*Track & Field* headers

Gulf Coast area Stop 'n Go con[illegible] stores [illegible] tournament on Mylstar's Krull *leading to the presentation [illegible] game to the winner Mark Johnson [illegible] Jerry Comstock, right [illegible] far right, presented the keys*

read "Konami/Centuri")

"Like most Japanese companies we are moving cautiously," Konami's Patty Vaccaro told *Play Meter*. "But we will be marketing our own games a year, maybe two, from now."

"We're making a considerable impact on the market, and we're going to make sure that our rights are preserved," Porterfield added. "We're (also) showing the people who want to do business with us that we're protecting our copyrights and trademarks. If you buy a license from us you're assured we'll be right there with you to enforce it.

"And lastly, (to) the counterfeiters themselves: word will get out whether it's through the underground or through the media, don't mess around with Konami." •

ATARI OPENS CHICAGO DISTRIBUTORSHIP

Atari Distributing in Chicago, the California game producer's "first and last" distributing office according to coin-op sales chief Jerry Marcus, will open in January and offer a full complement of sales and service on vending, music, and game machines. Atari will distribute all major amusement lines with the exception of Bally products, Marcus said.

Atari enters the distributing segment of the industry "to get closer to our ultimate consumer," Marcus proposed. The company recently developed an arcade division for the same purpose. (See "Atari Opens 'Higher Level' Game Center," p. 32.)

"We have almost 100 arcades now and this will give us buying power for those arcades as well as help us dispose of used equipment. It will also provide us with better testing information on our own products," Marcus said.

The absence of Bally's coin amusement line is notable in that Bally's distributing arm, headquartered in Chicago, represents Atari coin-op products. A former Atari marketing employee said Bally Distributing sold about 30 percent of Atari's coin-op games in 1982—according to market estimates about 40,000 games. Marcus called Bally Distributing "our biggest customer."

"We've asked (for the Bally line), but we have been put off as far as an answer is concerned," said Ed Pellegrini, vice president and general manager of the Atari distributing effort.

Bally executives declined comment on the issue, but recent moves there have been in the direction of limiting, rather than increasing, the company's distributing network.

Early last summer, in a speech to the National Coin Machine Institute convention, Bally President Robert Mullane said Bally would cut back its number of distributors. Then, after purchasing the coin-op division of Sega Electronics, Bally wrote Sega distributors to tell them they would not be adopted into the Bally network.

Pellegrini said Atari Distribution will limit its sales territory to Illinois, primarily to the Chicago area.

As of early December, reconstruction of a former warehouse in Elk Grove was progressing on schedule, but Pellegrini predicted only that the office and showroom would open "sometime in January."

Joining Pellegrini on the management team are Floyd Babbit, vice president of operations, and Howard Mayo, the former director of finance for Sega who will be financial comptroller. Pellegrini said he expects the Atari Distribution staff to number 35 by the day the office opens. •

SALE OF 'MINI VEGAS' HALTED

Digital Controls may be winning the court battles it is waging against Entertainment Enterprises, but losing the war.

Twice Digital Controls has succeeded in getting Entertainment Enterprises President Jed Foreman to withdraw countertop video card games from the coin-op marketplace after indications those games could be ruled infringements of copyrights owned by Digital Controls. And twice Foreman has been ready with replacements.

On November 23, the U.S. District Court in New York ordered Entertainment Enterprises not to "manufacture, import, transfer, sell, distribute or advertise" its *Mini Vegas*.

According to Ron Markis of Games Galore, a distributor of *Mini Vegas* and a spokesman for Entertainment Enterprises, the ruling is insignificant. "We're sold out of *Mini Vegas*. Our new game will be ready next week," he told *Play Meter* on December 7.

Mini Vegas was initially marketed in September when Foreman decided to withdraw the company's first countertop card game, *Reno Games*, from the market. Digital Controls had filed copyright infringement charges against *Reno Games* on July 20. (*Play Meter*, September 15, 1983, p. 23.)

"It's hardly worth the effort," Digital Controls President Mike Macke said, complaining about the time and money he spent in pursuit of a judgment against *Mini Vegas* and *Reno Games*. "For example, we went to New York to take depositions (pre-trial interviews) twice, and twice they didn't show up. They'll use any kind of delay tactics they can while they keep selling the games," he added.

The court issued a preliminary injunction against *Mini Vegas* on the strength of testimony from Mike Pace, Digital Controls principal and inventor of *Little Casino*. Pace unscrambled the source code of *Mini Vegas*, revealing it to be identical to *Little Casino's* code.

Foreman denied the games infringe on *Little Casino* and said he is surprised by the ruling. Foreman said he is ready to "fully defend" *Mini Vegas* at its upcoming trial, while admitting he is not in a position to know whether the source code of *Mini Vegas* is a copy of *Little Casino*.

"I am not a technician,and I don't know how to understand a source code," he told *Play Meter*. "We are simply the importers of the games. They are manufactured in Japan."

Foreman did not want to discuss the new game until "we advertise it," but he confirmed it is being manufactured by the same Japanese company that made *Reno Games* and *Mini Vegas*.

Markis said the new game, a four-games-in-one countertop video, is "completely original."

Macke said he will continue to

spend time and money in court to win damages from Entertainment Enterprises and to have *Mini Vegas* games confiscated. •

KIDDIE RIDE MANUFACTURERS JOIN FORCES

Two of the world's largest kiddie ride producers, Elektro-Mobiltechnik of West Germany and R. J. Newborough of England, will merge their U.S. marketing efforts. The stateside manufacturers' representative will work out of a Seminole, Florida, office which Newborough opened August 1.

The merger is scheduled to be completed by February 1, according to Wayne McKnight, a partner in the Newborough stateside business and manager of the Seminole office.

"Having an American office will enable both companies to give a better price on volume buys," McKnight explained. "We will also be able to finance end users (to sell direct) and will extend our current 6-month warranty to what our European factory offers, a full year."

McKnight has been unable to establish much of a distributor network to handle the Newborough line since he set up shop in Florida. With both companies' products to represent, that office should have more success with distributors, but more importantly to his marketing approach, a broader variety of equipment to offer end users.

McKnight said he has negotiated contracts with several national retail chains and will seek local operators to service those locations.

Elektro-Mobiltechnik, with 6,000 pieces in 1982, ranks first among kiddie ride manufacturers. R.J. Newborough, on the strength of 1,100 rides sold in 1982, ranks among the top four. McKnight said he has sold about 75 rides since the August opening. He estimated the merged effort will produce sales of a minimum of 35 pieces per month in 1984. •

NEWS BRIEFS

By Mike Shaw

Robert Marzelli, the attorney for Marshfield, Massachusetts, in the town's battle to enforce an ordinance banning video games, wrote in his brief to the U.S. Supreme Court: "...the end of the recent surge of popularity of coin-activated games has been widely reported in the press, as have the sales and profit declines of the major video game manufacturers. So video games may already be a form of electronic dodo bird." (*Play Meter*, January 15, 1984, p. 8)

Later Marzelli warned the court a victory for the video game industry "would create the right to play trivial arcade games as one of the cornerstone freedoms of our society. Such a decision would not only degrade the First Amendment; it would surely start a torrent of litigation on the question of which kinds of automatic amusement games were protected, which were not, and the nature of the protection accorded to each."

— — • — —

Fifteen employees of L.A. Leasing were arrested and 400 allegedly illegal imported French-made video poker gambling games were seized by Los Angeles vice detectives December 12. A department of liquor control official in Los Angeles said illegal video gambling has become rampant in California within the last six months.

— — • — —

Malaysia has acted on an earlier threat and banned the use of video games in public. Parents and consumer groups pushed for the nationwide ban, citing social and cultural problems posed by a video game boom in the Islamic country. There were reportedly 2,668 video games on location in the country when the ban was imposed. A video parlor owner there said he would discard his games because he could not sell or export them. Malaysia joined Singapore, the Philippines,and Indonesia in banning the games.

— — • — —

Gold Fever, a video slot machine featuring an animated prospector, has been approved for test by the Nevada Gaming Commission despite concerns it too closely resembles an arcade game. According to Richard Hyte of the Commission Control Board, the game is the first ever approved that does not use traditional gaming symbols such as cards, dice, or fruit.

More News Briefs are on p. 116.)

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TOURNAMENTS

ARNOLD WINS TEXAS AIR HOCKEY OPEN

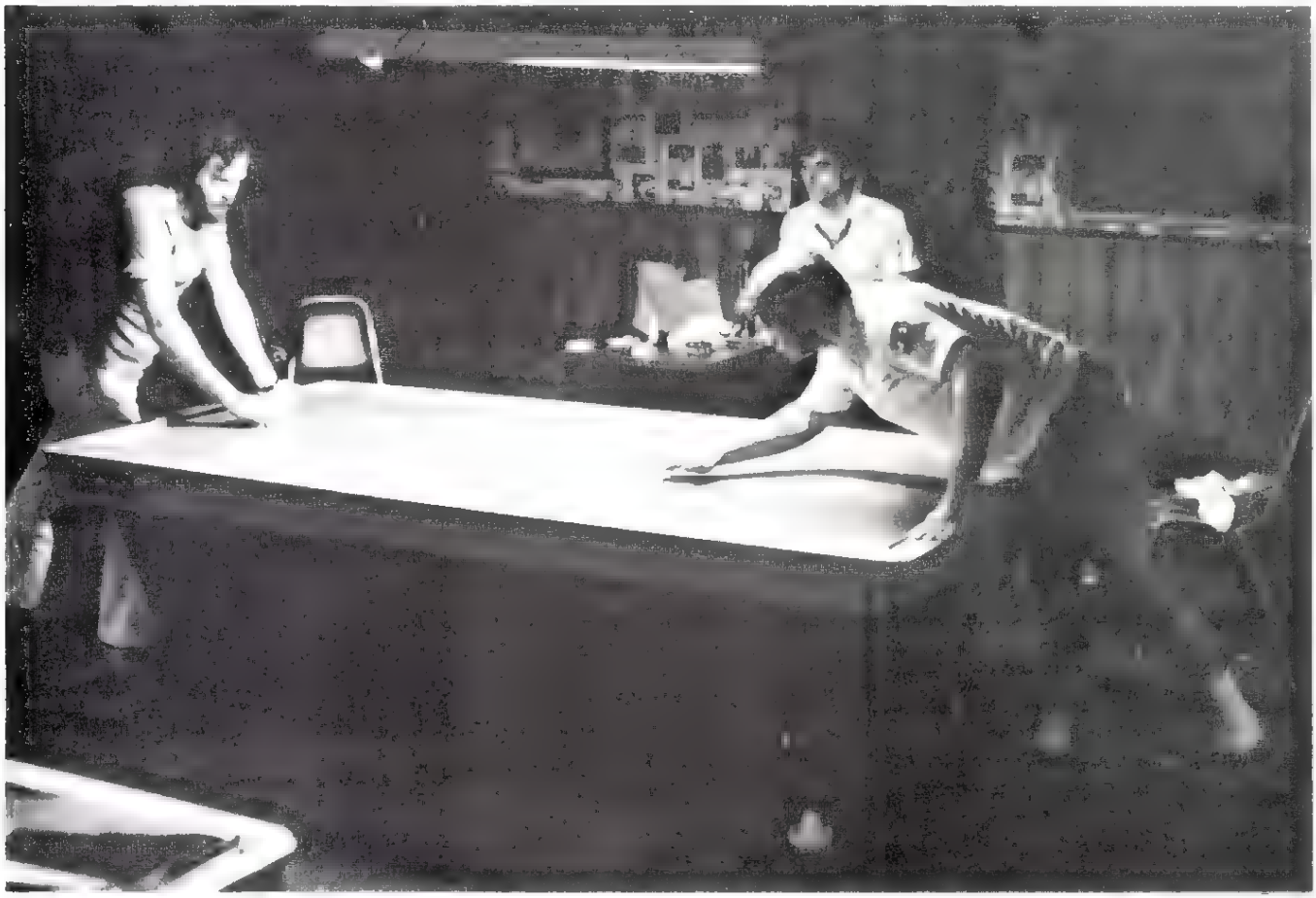
The Texas State Air Hockey Open was held recently at Barney's Game Room in Houston, Texas

Of the mostly local players, Phil Arnold of Houston emerged victorious. Rolf Moore of New Braunfels was in second place and Mark Robbins was third

Mark Robbins has long been an air hockey fan and gave several reasons why operators are reluctant to operate air hockey tables. "Many operators are under the impression that air hockey came and went," Robbins said. "Also some may have had a bad experience with a poor quality table years ago and haven't ventured into it again." Robbins continued, "Of course some operators can't operate air hockey because of their locations, but some just don't realize they can make money. And many still think in terms of dumping equipment, like videos, after six months."

Robbins feels its hard for operators to go wrong with air hockey because they will see a big return on investment. "I believe air hockey is among the top coin-op sports or any sports," claimed Robbins, "and there's a new generation of kids who aren't familiar with air hockey yet."

Robbins also said players are operating air hockey tables. He said Vince Schappell is one player operating tables. "He was devoted to air hockey, but no operators were operating tables in the area so Vince promoted his hobby (air hockey) into a job (operating air hockey tables). The players who operate the tables are not trying to steal locations but doing it out of necessity." •



Players compete in the Texas State Air Hockey Open held in Houston
Players who can't find air hockey tables in their area are starting to operate tables

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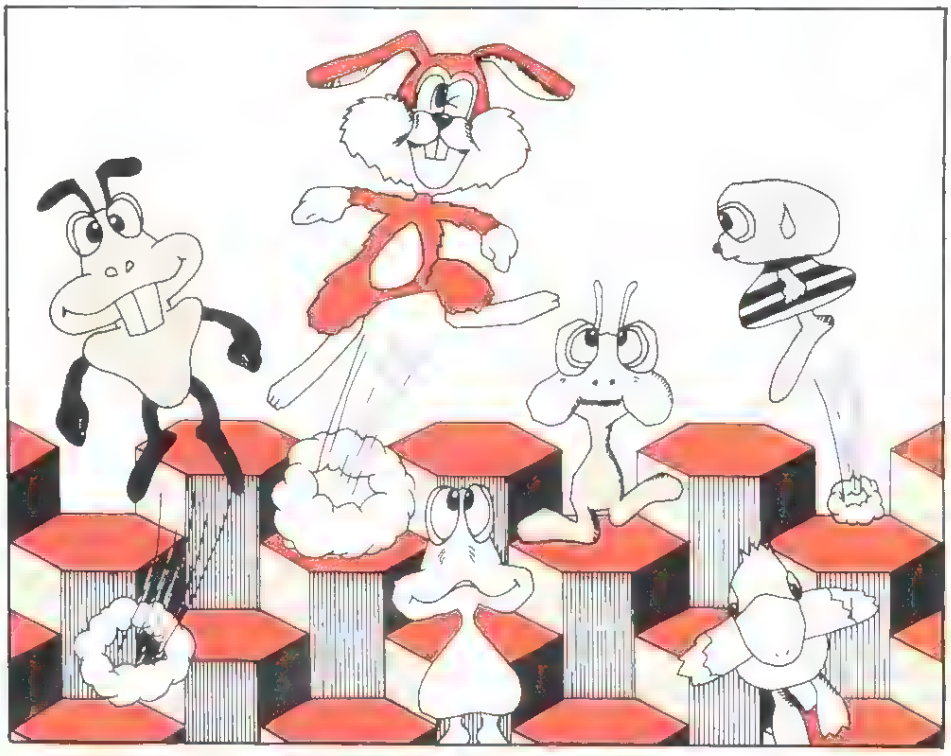
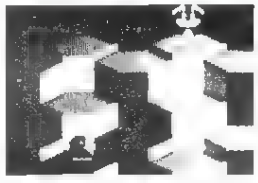
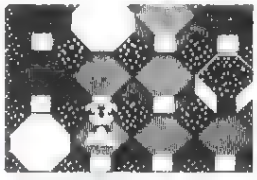




Make rabbit jump in 8 directions to avoid five enemies & score points



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DARTS TOURNAMENT PLAYERS SHOW SKILL, SPORTSMANSHIP

What do pool and *English Mark Darts* have in common? Leagues and tournaments one method of getting steady weekly earnings

Arachnid Inc reports that *English Mark Darts* leagues are sweeping across America

Rockford, Illinois, was the scene of TBI Games' $4,000 open *English Mark Darts* tournament September 17 and 18 On an otherwise drab and rainy weekend, more than 175 players gathered for fun, companionship, and to compete for a total of 45 prizes

Players traveled to the event from as far away as Green Bay, St Paul, central Iowa, and downstate Illinois As one spectator commented, "they sure came down to play some darts

The hometown players did a good job of it, but it was the out of towners who won the top honors Lane Helgeson from Green Bay narrowly defeated Bob Young of St Paul in the men's open division

It is hard to say which was more enjoyable to watch—the skill of these

Marcio Bonilla Kathy Manson Sam Zammuto and Peg Green (left to right) feel the thrill of victory Manson and Green took first place in the women's doubles division

Here's the crew from Foxy's the winner of the "Best Represented Location" award in the tournament Foxy's alone has 11 teams which participate in English Mark Darts leagues

Here's some of the darts action at the TBI English Mark Darts Open in Rockford, Illinois

Bob Young and Lane Helgeson are with Sam Zammuto (right) of Arachnid Helgeson took first place in the men's open and Young followed with a close second

TOURNAMENTS

players or their courtesy and sportsmanship. In fact, sportsmanship was the key word of the event. Not one harsh incident marred the two-day tournament, and gate admissions went to charity.

Despite coming in close second, Young had the honor of throwing two six-dart outs on the same day. Other six dart outs were thrown by Spencer Pettigrew and Guadelupe Delgabo, both of Rockford.

In the other divisions, first place was won by Kathy Manson and Peg Green in the women's doubles, by Pat Weir and Vicki White in the mixed doubles, and by Lane Helgeson and Herb Healey in the open doubles.

Other standings were as follows:

Women's Doubles
1. Kathy Manson-Peg Green
2. Nancy Swanson-Millie Smith
3. Pat Lockne-Ann Johnson
4. Shirley Berg-Debbie Guth
5. Mary Anderson-Pam Reese
6. Deanna Oakes-Vicki White
7. Tiny Armoska-Cindy McCullen
8. Cindy Keinz Colleen Streit
9. Judy Beall-Linda Saporiti
10. Verna Kail Doretta Kosman

Open Singles
1. Lane Helgeson
2. Bob Young
3. Tony Merlo
4. Steve Johnson
5. Stan Celner
6. Sam Zammuto
7. Gary Phillips
8. Scott North
9. Tim Parrott
10. Spencer Pettigrew
11. Danny Niesmeier
12. Mike Erickson
13. Pat Weir
14. Herb Healey
15. Dave Schultz

Open Doubles
1. Lane Helgeson-Herb Healey
2. Pat Weir-Bob Young
3. Chris Edwards-Dave Schultz
4. Tim Parrott-Gary Phillips
5. Larry Schneider-Frank Turbyville
6. Tom Freeberg-Spencer Pettigrew
7. Dave Robinson-Deanna Oakes
8. Scott North Steve Johnson
9. Jim Dickison Stan Celner
10. Sam Zammuto-Bob Lenz

Mixed Doubles
1. Pat Weir-Vicki White
2. Lane Helgeson-Shirley Berg
3. Jim Dickison-Colleen Streit
4. Sam Zammuto-Millie Smith
5. Tim Parrott-Kathy Scarpetta
6. Gary Phillips-Ann Johnson
7. Bob Lenz-Peg Green
8. Bill Miller-Pam Reese
9. Pat Lockne Bob Young
10. Herb Healey-Deb Guth

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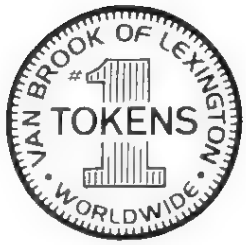

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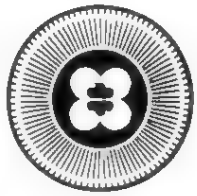

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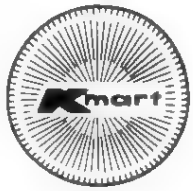

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M.A.C.H. 3
SOARS ABOVE THE PACK

"Just because it's a laser disc game doesn't mean it's going to make you money" was a stern warning issued by some industry observers over a year ago while others awaited the first laser disc as if it would revitalize a declining industry

Now with four new laser games joining Cinematronics' *Dragon's Lair* on locations nationwide, those proph ets are being proven correct Laser disc technology isn't a sure formula for operator profits, nor is it guaranteeing big sales for manufacturers

Only one of the recent laser disc offerings seems to be living up to its price tag Mylstar's *M A C.H. 3*, introduced in October, is the first laser game to overtake *Dragon's Lair*, introduced at AOE '83 and available that summer, in earnings battles Meanwhile, Stern's *Cliff Hanger* is getting mixed reviews, Bally's *Astron Belt* is a slow starter, and Data East's *Bega's* Boo-Boo

"*M A C H 3* is hot," said Richard Way of ShowBiz Pizza Place Inc The firm has invested $750,000 in the Mylstar piece—enough to supply each of the company-owned 140 locations—and the investment is paying dividends averaging a gross intake of about $400 weekly in early December

At the Sunnyvale headquarters of Chuck E Cheese Pizza Time Theatres, games' coordinator Inda Trinwith said the company's *M A C H 3* games were averaging $545 per week, surpassing early December weekly averages of $462 for *Dragon's Lair*

On the street location level, a major national convenience store chain representative said sitdown models of *M A.C H 3* were earning about $500 a week; upright versions, about $300

Most disappointing of the initial wave of laser games has been Data East's *Bega's Battle*

A convenience store games report showed *Bega's Battle* earned just $85 in 14 days on test. Pizza Time's Trinwith said *Bega's Battle* did so poorly when placed next to *Dragon's Lair* on location the company decided not to buy any of the games ShowBiz also tested the Data East laser game and rejected it

Mixed review

"We have two franchisees who have *Astron Belt*," Way said, referring to the game Bally bought Sega Electronics to obtain "I don't have any exact figures, but one said the game is doing well the other said it is doing very poorly"

Unimpressive reports on *Astron Belt* and the popularity of *M A C H 3* are keeping the Bally piece out of ShowBiz

M A C H 3 soars

Astron Belt *Reason enough to buy Sega?*

locations "We decided to spend our money on Mylstar's game because we were certain it would do well" Way explained

Sales of laser disc games have been generally slow, a major distributor told *Play Meter*. High prices "have kept all laser sales down," he noted, adding that only *Dragon's Lair* and *M A C H 3* proved to be adequate sales tools

"We have sold just three *Cliff Hangers*," he said in mid-December "And within a week of each sale, the operator wanted to trade it back in'

He said he has kept one *Bega's Battle* in stock for almost two months but has been unable to sell it

Makers of the early laser games are making alterations in them Data East General Manager Bob Lloyd said the company has made a ROM change for *Bega's Battle* "which will simplify the second and third stages of the game" The change has resulted in higher earnings on test, Lloyd said, but has not improved sales

Views on earnings

'Some people have an unrealistic view of what laser disc games should earn" Lloyd said, defending *Bega's Battle* "Each game is not going to do $1,000 a week People who are realistic are pleased with the game

"At the spring show, we will have a conversion for *Bega's Battle* that I feel is an excellent game," Lloyd continued A good conversion kit he proposed, would improve the investment value of *Bega's Battle*

Bega's *Boo Boo*

Almost as soon as Stern introduced *Cliff Hanger*, the company altered the storyline, eliminating morbid hanging scenes Although Pizza Time gave *Cliff Hanger* a high rating (testing at $325 a week), the convenience store games' manager characterized in come from *Cliff Hanger* as "only moderate," and ShowBiz buyers said they sent the game back after determining it would not produce a good ROI "That was before they took out the hanging scenes," Way noted. "We have agreed to test the new game," he said without much enthusiasm

Like Stern and Data East, Mylstar is offering an alteration to improve *M A C H 3* A revision kit for the sitdown model makes the game easier to play According to Stan Riddle, owner of the Back Porch arcade in Columbus, Mississippi, "no one would ever achieve a full mission on the original' Riddle should know Most of his clientele are Air Force cadets from a nearby training facility

"We solved the problem by taking out the coin mech and setting the game on demonstration mode," he explained "With unlimited ships, the players were able to complete the mission We charged $2 50 for each game which ended at the conclusion of the mission That worked out better because at an average of 50 cents for less than two minutes, I thought our players weren't getting their money's worth We wanted to see play last at least 3 minutes for 50 cents'

Dragon *Lair holds its own*

Dragon's Lair success

Amid the new releases, *Dragon's Lair* is holding its own, both in distributor sales and in earnings, agreed those interviewed by *Play Meter* *Dragon's Lair* still maintains an average of $462 in Pizza Time Theatre locations and nearly $300 per week at ShowBiz sites Riddle said the Back Porch does "about $350 to $400 in a good week" from *Dragon's Lair*, although his crowd is thoroughly familiar with the game He has had *Dragon's Lair* since July

All in all, a distributor summarized, operators are cautious about investing as much as $5,000 in a laser disc game His distributorship, he noted, is being similarly cautious in offering credit on laser lines

"Many of our operators are just coming out from under the debt problems they have had for the last couple of years," he pointed out. "I hate to see them get right back into trouble with a $5 000 bomb" •

ATARI OPENS 'HIGHER LEVEL' GAME CENTER

Attempting to control the environment in which its products are presented to the public, Atari opened a prototype Atari Adventure November 19 in Northwest Plaza, a St Louis suburban shopping mall

The facility is the culmination of two years of developing Atari's ideal contemporary operation, an arcade/computer learning center designed "to bring the traditional game room to a new and higher level as an entertainment and educational form," according to Atari Operations Vice President Barne Sullivan

Although Atari's Adventure concept has been tried as part of other amusement centers—at Marriott's Great Adventure and in Disneyland—the St Louis facility is the first self-contained expression of Atari's commitment to video game room operation. It is the type of operation Atari hinted at a year ago when it told *Play Meter* readers it would establish an arcade division

"We are trying to take the video game experience in each instance to a higher level," Marketing Vice President Don Osborne said (*Play Meter*, January 1, 1983, p. 30)

Atari dabbled in operations with airport locations until April 1983 when it bought Magna/Fun's 42 Space Port arcades Atari retained much of the Magna/Fun management, using that acquisition as a basis for its operations division

Atari embarked on its Adventure project when the arcade could be considered an endangered species of sorts. Many of the industry's large arcades have been forced to close or have shifted ownership over the last year as public interest in video games wanes The decline in overall industry revenues has been especially tough on Atari's earnings

But the company believes that controlling the presentation of its products will result in new successes for coin op game and home computer sales Atari has contracted Northwest Plaza one of the world's largest shopping malls to test its belief

Combining computer, coin-op

"This represents a company ideal to bring together our computer and coin-op business," said Atari's Dick Needleman, who supervised the completion of the St Louis facility

Atari Adventure is divided into three

The Atari Adventure game room features a contemporary environment and offers 65 games Monitors allow observers to watch the action on some of the industry's current hits without peering over players' shoulders

parts. An eight-station computer learning center is at the entrance of the location. There a full time instructor helps users achieve computer literacy or simply monitors selections from a vast software library. He can help individuals who visit the center or handle scheduled computer classes. Users pay on a time/use basis, about the same rate they pay to play coin-op video games, Needleman said.

Although the computer learning center features the latest Atari equipment—the St. Louis facility is stocked with Atari 800XL computers—neither equipment nor software will be sold at Atari Adventure. "However, introducing people to the world of computers on our equipment should help the sales of local Atari dealers," Needleman said.

Atari Adventure also houses a high tech display area featuring, among other high tech pieces, prototypes of new video games.

The game room at Atari Adventure offers 65 of the industry's latest coin-op hits set for token operation. Some of the top games are placed around a partition near the center of the game room. The partition supports monitors so observers can watch play on the spot-lighted games without interfering with players.

Customer data

In addition to creating the environment it wants in which to present products, Atari hopes its operations division will provide the company with significant data about ultimate consumers or users.

"Atari Adventure will greatly aid our research efforts relative to determining play preference," Sullivan said. "The additional input will allow us to fine-tune our current research process." •

Atari Adventure instructors intend to help many St. Louis youths achieve computer literacy at their eight-station computer learning center.

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The Glob features a money back guarantee

Kevin McIntyre

Eagle Conversions is offering a special edition of *The Glob*, a Magic Conversion game designed as a replacement for upright and table model *Pac Man* games. *The Glob's* producers and marketers offer operators a money back guarantee that the game will produce a satisfactory return on investment.

"We have already sold over 500 games," said Kevin McIntyre of Magic Conversion, the game's producer. "Many of those have been to operators who tried the game and are coming back for more. So we know it is a success and that it can be used to get *Pac-Man* games, which have already been productive, to continue to make money. Our guarantee is a way of showing how sure we are of the game's financial success."

The kit costs $325 and it includes side decals, a header glass, a monitor glass, a front panel overlay, joystick, buttons, and a printed circuit "subboard" and ROMs (which fit into the *Pac-Man* board hardware). Considering the kit's price, an operator should recognize the game will produce adequate ROI within a couple of weeks, McIntyre said. "We will take the game back up until about 2 weeks after the operator has put it on location."

The Glob is also available as part of the *Magic Conversion System*, a hardware/software package available from Magic Conversion of Providence, Rhode Island. But the *Pac-Man* edition of *The Glob* has been licensed by Eagle Conversions, also of Providence, and is available only through that firm.

"It is a simple conversion," McIntyre continued. "It can be performed easily and quickly, mainly because there is no wiring. Everything is designed to fit right onto the *Pac-Man* hardware."

McIntyre said Eagle and Magic intend to provide equipment to the coin-op industry at the lowest possible prices. "It is what the operators have needed all along," McIntyre explained, "inexpensive equipment that provides a quick and certain return." ●

Machine Taxation Puzzles Incomat Attendees

By Gerry Wise

The complications in the legalities surrounding the use of not just gaming machines, but all coin-operated amusement equipment in Austria, must have puzzled as many operators from the nine lands there as it did the international visitors to Incomat, November 23-25

Laws differ from land to land—a land being a country or state—and have a habit of changing almost at the drop of a hat. In some lands machines have been totally banished, and where they are permissible, license fes are extremely prohibitive

The 11th Austrian trade show, organized by the Verband der Munzautomatenwirtschaft, was held at the Congress Centre in Vienna's Oberlaa district.

Unfortunately, however, the show was hit not just by the general apathy obvious among operators in Austria, but by severe icy weather that virtually paralyzed the country on the last day of the three-day show

Komm-Rat Josef Frohlich, a minister responsible to the catering, brewing, and leisure industries, said in a statement published by Verband der Munzautomatenwirtschaft in its show catalog that amusement machines are a major factor in keeping the tourist happy. "And it is the tourist we rely on in Austria," he stressed

"It is sad that some lands had some tax dodgers which reflected badly on the industry," he said, no doubt offering a form of an excuse for the penal taxation that exists on machine operators throughout Austria "It is hard for visitors from other countries coming to Austria for holidays, that games they are used to are not available here. But with high technology, we can anticipate that a machine will appear that will suit Austrian requirements. The industry, I know, is always looking for this."

Aid tourism

The Austrian trade association's president, Siegfried Hilpold, also stressed that today's problems in the coin machine industry in Austria must be sought out and resolved in the interests of tourism as well, of course, as the members of Verband der Munzautomatenwirtschaft.

Exhibitors at Incomat, however, were few and the variety of equipment limited. None of the laser disc video games were evident, and among the games on show were five copies of video games, somewhat surprising for the Austrian market.

Pro Racing and *Top Racer* were copies of *Pole Position*, and there were direct copies of *Gyruss*, *Krull*, and *Driv ers USA*. There was also a Japanese version of *Mr. Do!'s Castle* exhibited. This is different from the authorized worldwide board which is officially handled in Austria by Stefan Farkasfalvy, according to Universal's European agent John Stergides who made a fleeting visit to Incomat.

Another international visitor to Vienna was Data East's European manager Jim Pryde. As an exhibition, he found Incomat very small. "It hardly warrants international status," he said, "but the quality of what they manufacture is very good. I'm pleased I went, however, as I renewed and made contacts and hope that inroads can be made there."

NSM/Lowen wallbox

The jukebox market in Austria remains minimal, but at Incomat, I was impressed with the new NSM/Lowen wallbox shown on the expansive TAB stand. A remote control selection box with a 200 title, easily changeable display, it has been specially designed to be connected to the NSM/Lowen models E, ES, and ESII phonographs. It has its own control and credit unit and can be programmed individually. All the usual ingredients, such as single hits, group hits, and music groups, are available by pressing separate keys. The electronic components are naturally based on the latest computer technology, while the power is supplied from either the phonograph or a hideaway unit using an 8-core cable.

The most impressive new piece of equipment on show, however, was highlighted on the exhibition's most impressive stand. Manufacturer Novomatic introduced an *Admiral American Poker* machine that caught the imagination of the majority of visitors. With the cards dealt at speeds varied to the size of the stake and on a green baize background, Novomatic's new poker machine has two coin acceptors with an opto coin switch and an adjustable credit value per coin of between one and 200 points

Novomatic also featured a novel, interesting amusement game with appeal for both young and old in *Gut Holz*. Suitable as a free-standing upright cabinet or wall-mounted machine, *Gut Holz* is a machine based on the old arcade cup games.

Two games in one

Josef Ohlinger of Gmunden introduced an interesting video game unit where the player is given a choice of two games to play via a compact adaptor using two power packs. •

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STATE UPDATE

BY VALERIE COGNEVICH

National Automatic Merchandising Association

Kenneth J. Nowak, president of Variety Vendors, Warren, Michigan, was elected chairman of the board of directors of the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) for 1984 at its annual convention and trade show at Chicago's McCormick Place.

He succeeds Ralph Sanese of Sanese Services Inc., Columbus, Ohio, and currently serves as NAMA's senior vice chairman

NAMA is the national association of the vending and foodservice management industry, comprising more than 2,400 member firms.

Other new association officers for 1984 are: senior vice chairman, John M. Darden III, president of Sands & Co., Marietta, Georgia; vice chairman, James A. Rost, president of Interstate United Corporation, Chicago; and treasurer, Jay B Moyer, president of Moyer Diebel, Limited, Jordan Station, Ontario, Canada

All were elected for a one-year term beginning January 1.

The following were elected to the NAMA board of directors: Theodore Alpert, Maryland Cup Corporation, Chicago; William E. Buckholz, Goodman Vending Service, Reading, Pennsylvania; R. David Clayton, Automatic Foodservice Inc., Nashville, Tennessee; and David W. Stoner, Lektro-Vend Corporation, Aurora, Illinois.

Re-elected were Nowak, Rost, Moyer, Merrill Krakauer, president of Rowe International, Whippany, New Jersey; William K. Walsh, Continental Vending Inc., Orange, California; and William J. Tobin, Nabisco Brands USA, East Hanover, New Jersey.

1984 NAMA officers are (left to right) Jay B Moyer, treasurer, Ken Nowak chairman James A Rost vice chairman; G. R Schreiber president and [illegible] John Darden III [illegible]

ARIZONA

Youngtown: The only video game in Youngtown was removed in June 1982 when an ordinance to discourage video games was passed. So, though there are no videos in Youngtown, the Town Council unanimously approved a more stringent ruling in October.

Mayor Charles Stierwalt, apparently explaining the action, said, "We just prefer not to have them in our town. If we can, we want to keep them out." And there may be more changes in the ordinance to make it even stronger.

"The people here just don't have an interest in video games, and we just don't like the conditions that exist when they're around," the mayor noted.

FLORIDA

Sweetwater: The City Council voted 4-3 to stay the enforcement of its anti-game machine ordinance and allow a public vote in a referendum in May. However, only those games now in town are allowed—new video games are prohibited.

Sweetwater Police Chief Charles Toledo, reversing his 1981 position against the machines, told the *Miami Herald*, "It's unfair to say these machines attract bad kids. There's no sure correlation between pinball machines and crime."

ILLINOIS

Hillside: The owner of a novelty T-shirt shop whose video game license was revoked is threatening to sue. Village officials claim the games are the store's primary source of business. Up to six games are allowed only if they are a secondary source. Errol Vestuto, owner of What's Up Doc, said the games draw customers in to buy his merchandise, and eliminating them will hurt his retail income severely.

St. Charles: If city aldermen have their way, St. Charles will be free of video games by 1988 with its current coin game ordinance putting a freeze on licenses for new games, limiting the games to the number already in use. Aldermen figured if there was a choice of letting in more games or banning them completely, they would ban them.

An arcade, The Corral, viewed as a hangout for drug peddling teens, closed after its landlord refused to renew the lease. Aldermen apparently believe it would be better to sacrifice profits of tavern owners and deprive adults of video game

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THE other man's grass may not always be greener, but it is satisfying to know it's not. Similarly, it's worth knowing how he got it that way. Isolationism is definitely a thing of the past and every American operator needs to know what is happening in the coin machine industry beyond his own shores—if only to know what he's missing.

For that reason, we think you must keep abreast of trade events, new equipment, methods of operating and the problems besetting your colleagues in other countries.

There is no better way of finding out what is happening in the rest of the world's coin machine industry than reading *Coin Slot*, each week. It has an audited worldwide circulation of 31,600, which demonstrates the appeal of the publication and illustrates why it is regarded as the world's most authoritative medium for coin machine information.

It is published in Great Britain in newspaper format every week. That means that no publication anywhere in the world has a faster news service on coin machines and coin machine events. A major video games exhibition in Tokyo, a coin machine show in Australia, an amusements exhibition in Germany—these and so much more is fully reported in *Coin Slot* within a matter of days.

That makes it an indispensible aid to business for any operator with a keen awareness of the necessity of knowing what the trends are elsewhere and particularly for detecting early whether those trends are likely to affect his own business.

Many American manufacturers tell us that very often their Press releases make their way to the *Coin Slot* offices in Lancashire, England, are printed and published in *Coin Slot* and are back on their desks in the United States before they have seen the same releases published in their own country.

You can get *Coin Slot* each week by air mail for just $86 for a full year's subscription by filling in the coupon below.

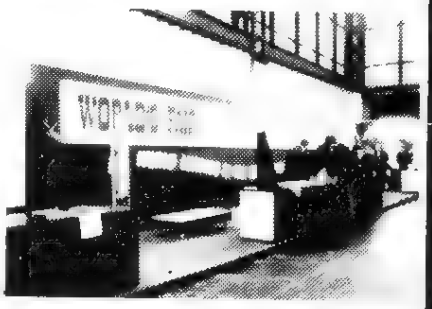
Similarly, if you wish to keep abreast of the news behind the news, there is no finer way than by taking *Coin Slot's* glossy quarterly magazine, *Coin Slot Location*, which takes the key issues of the moment and conducts an in depth investigation into their background. Full of colour, packed with information and presented in a decidedly up market format, *Location* has in its three year life, created for itself a respect unrivalled internationally.

That too can be on your desk by air mail, for $45 per year and with *Coin Slot* itself provides you with all you need to know about coin machine matters anywhere in the world.

Upcoming events destined for full and fast exposure in our publications include the JAMMA Coin Machine Exhibition in Tokyo in September, the London Previews, Canada in Rome, IFER '83 in the Spanish resort of Malaga, the Internationale Automaten Schau in Zurich and, of course, AMOA itself in New Orleans in October. In November we'll be back in New Orleans for a look at the IAAPA Show and in Vienna for the Austrian exhibition Incomat. Before the year ends we'll also be in Paris for Foramexpo.

With the new year comes the Nuremberg Toy Fair, the world's largest toy show, in Frankfurt, mounting a comprehensive look at the West German scene, the first of the UK's premier [illegible] shows, the Northern Show in Blackpool. In February there's the new Amusement Showcase International in Chicago, the AFE, still perhaps the most prestigious coin machine event anywhere in London. March sees a quick return to Chicago for AOE, Spain for SADA '84 and Ireland's Coin Op event in Dublin before the season comes to a close with the Miami Fair in July.

Other events, big and small, will also figure in our plans—which adds up to the most complete international exhibition reporting by any publication anywhere. If there's a game to rock the world at any of those shows, you'll not miss it if you are a subscriber. And that, by itself, is full justification for keeping in touch by subscription to *Coin Slot* and *Coin Slot Location*. Do it now!



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entertainment to avoid the risk of another Corral opening.

Tavern owners and several arcade companies argued that it's bad management that allows coin-op amusements to be abused. Even one alderman agreed, "I don't think there's a problem with them (arcades) if they're controlled properly."

MARYLAND

Baltimore: Two bills concerning video games moved closer to final passage in early November. One bill would allow more videos under certain circumstances in some areas of the city where they are restricted However, a last minute amendment would allow residents near small businesses planning to place video games to oppose the permit

A small business would be required to post a sign on the premises for 10 days announcing its intentions. If a minimum of 10 written responses objecting to the games are received by the zoning board, the permit would not be granted without a public hearing

The other bill would require locations to pay a $15 permit fee to have video games. This would be in addition to the operating tax of $300 per machine each year

College Park: The County Planing Commission recommended in November the County Council approve a bill to disassociate video stores and video arcades since the two had been categorized together and needed a special exception to planning laws. Summing up the issue, A. Senes, legislative liasion, said, "Renting video games is not disruptive."

MASSACHUSETTS

Shirley: Shirley businesses can now house up to six video games per location according to a new ordinance going into effect January 1 Thanks to Board Chairman Eliot Goldman and member Sylvia Shipton, the proposed increase in fees from $25 to $250 per game by Charles DeSmet was overridden, and fees will remain the same.

MICHIGAN

Taylor: Taylor will have its first video arcade around the first of the year despite last ditch efforts by the City Council to halt it. The Council unanimously adopted an emergency amusement ordinance to supersede the previous one.

However, a U.S. District Court judge, Avern Cohn, issued a temporary restraining order against the city this fall, which will allow the Red Barron Arcade to open. Mayor Cameron Priebe feels that the courts are overruling local governments' desires by permitting these businesses to open. The mayor also was referring to an adult bookstore that had been allowed to open in 1982 Speculating on the slim chances of keeping the arcade out, City Attorney Allen Kovinsky said, "Well, they're in, and if they comply with building and other codes and run a clean operation with adequate supervision, chances are minimal that they would be kept out."

MINNESOTA

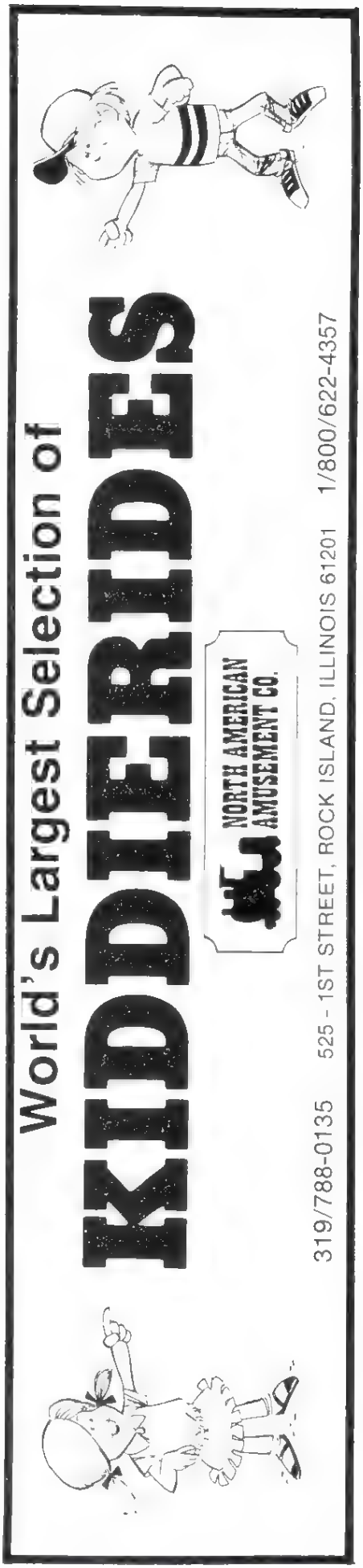
West St. Paul: Donald Hanson, owner of D&H Sales, filed a lawsuit against the city protesting unfair city taxes on video games. The city agreed to a settlement (It dropped the $200 tax and agreed not to increase the annual $25 license fee before 1985 and not reinstate an ordinance that prohibited children under 16 from playing videos without an adult.), claiming it felt defense costs would have been too high.

Hanson's attorney felt the decision was significant. He said he believes it precludes a municipality from taxing video games unless it receives specific authorization from the state legislature.

NEW JERSEY

East Windsor: Twin Rivers Amusements' owner Irv Spinak appeared before the Township Council to challenge members on their decision to uphold an ordinance charging arcade owners a $100 per game license fee. Township Manager Reagan Burkholder wrote a memo in which he justified fees stating, "(the fees) are based on anticipated time for processing application information, inspection of the premises, and possible enforcement efforts."

In his rebuttal, Spinak said he strongly objected to implications that arcades attract a less than desirable crowd. Police Chief Joseph Michnisky told council members, "There have been no problems. .Mr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Spinak has been very cooperative with the police...We have experienced juvenile problems in the (Twin Rivers) mall, but I can't say it's related to the arcade."

Another arcade owner, Dominick Annibale of Video Adventure, said he has lost business since he reduced the number of his machines from 22 to 11 in order to afford the fees.

The ordinance will be presented to the new council after January for possible reconsideration.

OHIO

Play Meter would like to join the Ohio Music and Amusement Association in extending sympathy to the family of Edward R. Bremer of Bremer Vending who died October 15. Bremer had been active in OMAA and his regional chapter.

Hamilton: Butler County Sheriff Robert Walton vowed to go to jail before returning seized "video-game gambling" machines in an escalated war on this equipment.

Walton decided to round up the machines after allegedly receiving an average of two complaints a week from family members of people who had lost substantial sums in the machines. Twelve machines have been confiscated so far, and authorities claim they are uncertain who owns the machines seized in the latest raids

PENNSYLVANIA

The Finance Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives sent for action a bill (#HB1476) in November which would cap the tax at $25 per machine with a $10 limit for any licensing fees. However, an added grandfather clause would keep all taxes in force July 1, 1983, at their current level

PAMMA (Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association) stresses the urgency of having the grandfather clause removed or the time period moved up before taxes skyrocketed. PAMMA reminds operators to contact representatives and ask for support for the bill in its original form.

Roaring Spring: Businessmen in Roaring Spring have been strong in contacting councilmen complaining about an ordinance placing a $35 tax on every game machine in the borough.

In an effort to dissuade the council from passing the "Pac-Man tax," Dr. Gary Baney of Roaring Spring said, "To me it's like penalizing the businessman." He suggested the council consider tax breaks for businessmen so business would thrive "If business profits, the borough profits," he said

One councilman said he talked with several other businessmen who inferred they would stop donating to local clubs if the ordinance passed.

RHODE ISLAND

Cumberland: A strict video game ordinance, which took months of study to compile, was turned down in October by the Town Council Councillor Marlene Smith, head of the video game subcommittee, said after speaking with convenience store managers, she was convinced that the problem of children causing noise and control problems in stores no longer exists.

TEXAS

Addison: A fall ruling resulting from a suit filed in 1981 said that Addison's ban on video games in restaurants that serve alcohol is unconstitutional. City Manager Ron Whitehead said the ban on video games was to "encourage only quality dining experiences in Addison." The city may appeal the ruling.

VERMONT

Deciding residents of Vermont had contributed enough toward the state deficit through paychecks, the House Ways and Means Committee decided its residents should give at the grocery store, restaurants, and video arcades

Taxes on banks and corporations and taxes on rooms and meals drew support, but the reaction to taxes on non-essential food and drink items and video games was another story.

"They're preying on the poor and the young," said Democratic leader, Representative Ralph Wright. His opinion is shared by other lawmakers. The tax on video games would amount to 1-cent on each quarter. Wright fears young players would end up paying. "I don't want to see the tax coming out of a kid's pocket," he said. •

If you have been contacted by a company called either Equipment Sales & Service or American East Coast or by anyone using the names Bruce Ellis Sackheim, Tim Stephens, Jerry Bond, Mike Littick, or Charles Dalton, contact the FBI. Call Special Agent John Gilbert in New Orleans at 504/522-4671 or the nearest FBI office.

The men named are the subject of current FBI investigation in a matter involving operators receiving Western Union mailgrams to purchase video games with terms of one-third down, one-third C.O.D., and one-third invoice. However, according to the FBI, no equipment is ever received. Losses to date are said to exceed $40,000.

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Brian Duke of Universal stands proudly by Mr. Do!'s Castle *"Orders have gone beyond our expectations," he said.*

Al Perreto of Exidy and Brian Duke of Universal discuss a game by Merit Industries.

Peach State Holds Open House

Peach State Distributing Company opened its modern office to 150 operators for an open house. Held about a month after AMOA, the open house gave operators unable to attend AMOA the opportunity to view the new equipment.

Many manufacturers' representatives attended, including Bally Midway, Atari, Data East, Universal, Merit Industries, Digital Controls, Exidy, Nintendo, Dynamo, and Valley. Operators inspected new products such as: *Spy Hunter, Granny & the Gators, Discs of Tron, X's & O's, Pole Position II, Major Havoc, Crystal Castles, Fax, Crossbow, Cliff Hanger, Ice Cold Beer, M.A.C.H. 3, Krull, Destiny, Bega's Battle, Pro Soccer,* Digital Control's new laser game for its Countercade system which also includes *Fax*, and countertop games by Merit Industries.

Operator comments ranged from optimistic to pessimistic. Some were looking for conversions, some were looking at closeouts, but all of them were looking for a reasonably priced game that would provide a return on investment.

"Conversion kits are what I'm

Mike Macke (center) and Ken Pacheco (right) of Digital Controls answer questions from an operator.

Mort Antky (center) and Peter Feuer of Merit Industries talk with operators.

Mireille Chevalier of Exidy demonstrates Crossbow.

Janice Meschke of Peach State talks with several operators.

looking at," commented one operator.

"I think operators have been spending the last months trying to get out of debt and now may be buying a few more pieces," said Jim Reilley of Reilley Electronics.

Operators seemed to agree that they were looking for something new to buy—something good that would show a fair return on investment. "I think the operators have given a message to the manufacturers," said Jim Reilley. "And that message is that we operators are not going to buy mediocre equipment. We have rotated equipment and have not been buying games like we once did. So I think the manufacturers will have to listen to us and put out some good games so we will buy."

"Many operators in this area have commented to me that they are 'country operators' that run rural type routes. They just can't afford to buy equipment that costs $5,000. Very few of their locations could support that kind of expensive equipment," said Paul Calamari of Bally.

Stan Seymour of Stan's Amusements said he has been looking closely at the closeouts. "Some of the closeouts have been extremely good deals for me. I find that I am waiting for those closeouts instead of buying equipment at high prices."

"Operators seem to think that because a manufacturer can close out games at much less than regular cost that they should have been able to sell them for that to begin with," commented Mireille Chevalier of Exidy. "But, looking at it from a manufacturers' point of view, if the factory has a large inventory of games with a new product ready to go in production, it is forced to close out. But, the manufacturer is sometimes selling at cost or maybe below—he is not making money on that closeout." •

Everyone waits for a name to be called in the drawing for door prizes.

Paul Calamari of Bally (left), Jim Libby of Peach State, and John Shingler of Peach State stop to smile for a photo

IAAPA Show Draws 8,695 Attendees

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) held its 65th annual convention and trade show at the Rivergate in New Orleans November 18-20. The Rivergate was the location of the AMOA Show only weeks before

Showing an increase from last year's attendance of about 7,000, this year's show had 8,695 attendees visiting 402 exhibitors on 102,000 square feet of exhibit area.

According to an amusement parks industry spokesman, the marked increase in attendance verified a trend of optimism—exhibitors said attendees were in a buying mood.

According to Bob Blundred, executive vice president of the IAAPA, most of the 500 members with permanently located amusement parks have an arcade or game room. So, the coin-operated amusement industry made a showing with some familiar names and products. Bally Distributing had a booth with games from the factories it represents. Exidy had its own booth but also featured *Crossbow* in the Bally booth.

The Norton Company exhibited its popular novelty games including the new *Humphalump* recently seen at the AMOA Show. It also showed a ticket dispenser for installation on any type of equipment

U.S. Billiards displayed the *Super Bowl* bowling game, an apparent success at the AMOA, and the Philadelphia Toboggan Company/ Skee-Ball Inc. drew interest from players from its famous *Skee-Balls*.

Other familiar companies in the coin-op amusement industry included several token companies—Roger Williams Mint, Green Duck Corp., and Van Brook of Lexington. Other companies from the coin-op amusement industry exhibiting were Air-Table-Hockey, Sally Animation, Vending International, Standard

James Dickey (right) of Van Brook says business in the amusement park and attractions industry has been very good

Bob's Space Racers' booth drew large crowds.

Shelley Valudos and Al Petretto of Exidy stand by Tidal Wave. *(I thought it would be impossible to photograph Al not smiling.)*

Metal Typer, Scan Coin, The Robot Factory, North American Amusement Company, The National Ticket Company, Mendes, Meltec, Kiddie Rides USA, Greyhound Electronics, Carousel International, Bob's Space Racers, Alter Enterprises, and Amusement Technology.

Philadelphia Toboggan/Skee-Ball won the Leonard Thompson Award presented for the most meritorious exhibit of arcade and coin-op devices. This award is for the exhibit of arcade and coin-op devices of the most interest and value to members. U.S.Billiards and N.E.Venture Group got an Honorable Mention. •

Richard Bartlett and Bob Haim of Belam stop between exhibits.

The Roger Williams Mint representative is busy as he talks about token advantages

David Pierson of Play Meter *chats with Oscar Robins of Vending International.*

From left are Andy Ducay of Midway, Ron Malinouski of Aladdin's Castle, Bernie Powers of Aladdin's Castle, Frank Pellegrini of Atari, and Chuck Arnold of Bally

Several policemen even tested their shooting skills at American Arcade Specialty Co.'s Hillbilly Moonshine *exhibit.*

A NEW YORK CITY 'STING' NETS RESULTS

By Roger C. Sharpe

It seems that for every two steps the industry takes forward, something inevitably causes the loss of a step. We are at a point where new technologies and innovative product design promise to improve coin-op's fortunes.

Although it would be easy to assert that coin-op by and large, is an honorable and honest business, any situation can cast doubts on the propriety of each individual. It's guilt by association, and the public, in general, has never been comfortable with coin-operated amusement machines. It waits for the industry to trip up, which it invariably does, to get the necessary ammunition to support fears and discontent.

While many communities are engaged in battles that would limit the operation of coin-op games, or create legislation to reduce the accessibility of games to schoolage children, a sting operation in New York had some results that weren't surprising.

On November 10, *The New York Times* featured a story headlined "Undercover Game Store Nets Six in Brooklyn Investigation." The report, undoubtedly, made for fascinating reading to those ready to condemn the industry. Here's the story:

"Six men, including a reputed organized-crime figure, were arrested yesterday on loan-sharking, gambling, and other charges stemming from a Brooklyn undercover investiation into the video-game business."

Undercover detectives set up a combination video game parlor and yogurt shop.The investigation began last summer in the Bath Beach area, and its purpose was "to test how long it might be before criminals moved in on the business," authorities said.

The public waits for the industry to trip up to get the necessary ammunition to support fears and discontent.

When criminal activities are brought to the public's attention, it has an incredible adverse effect on honest operators.

It is important that the industry police itself before others can.

It didn't take long. At a news conference District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman showed illegal slot machines that had been converted from legal video game machines.

Holtzman's office charged that some defendants arranged for the "illegal gambling machines to be delivered to the undercover store" and that most of those charged shared in the profits from the illicit machines. The devices were hidden in a back room of the parlor, while legal video game machines were in the front, Holtzman said

Reputed mob figure

Carmine Lombardozzi, 70 years old, the reputed mob figure from Brooklyn, authorities charged had "advanced and profited" from the illegal gaming activity by "exercising control over the undercover store. He was charged with promoting gambling and loan-sharking.

Holtzman said he and a second defendant from Brooklyn, Frank Balsamello, 53, had acted "in concert" to lend $2,000 to one of the undercover detectives at a usurious annual interest rate of 130 percent

All the defendants pleaded not guilty at their arraignments in Brooklyn Criminal Court and were released on bail or without bail. Charles Carnesi, an attorney for Lombardozzi and Balsamello, said his clients "had nothing to do" with the undercover operation, which he termed "an outrage done for publicity value."

Regardless of the outcome or even the intent of the operation, it seemingly served its purpose. Here we have an undercover investigation

Change Games In 20 Minutes With New Adult Video Game System.

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created solely to see how long it would take organized crime to become involved. This wasn't a matter to discover *if* organized crime woudl enter into the picture, but *how long* it would take.

The setup was undertaken with the belief that the investigation would deliver positive findings. The district attorney had reason to believe that something fishy might be going on with the operation of coin-op amusement games. And, unfortunately, she was right

But this shouldn't come as that much of a surprise to many in the business. After all, as the games proliferated to the degree that it's difficult, if not impossible, to monitor where machines are operated, there are always some who would take advantage of such a situation believing that there's little, if any, risk involved.

Easy target

It's a shame that the coin-op industry is such an easy target for those who want to take advantage of the obvious opportunities in parlaying amusement devices into gambling equipment. But the situation is almost too good to pass up. Legitimate members of the industry tend to turn the other way when something like this occurs, unless it gets too close to home. And all too often there are distributors or jobbers more than willing to fill orders even when they know the machines break the rules of local, legal guidelines.

The problem is that when this activity is brought to the public's attention, it tends to have an incredible adverse effect on honest operators trying to make a living within the rules. And all the advancements in technological applications don't amount to a hill of beans when the coin-op business is put on the spot. There's no where to hide. Someone, somewhere, will always attempt to pull one over on everybody.

What is important, however, is that the industry polices itself before others can. If the practice of operating illegal games got out of hand and spread to other cities, before too long we'd see the types of legal actions which plagued this industry in the late '30s and early '40s.

Could coin-op, as a novelty amusement business survive? I doubt it, and I also don't give much hope for those who think that society's attitude about gambling is changing. It's going to be a long time before we see any appreciable tolerance toward gambling, especially when it's not limited to defined and isolated areas such as Reno, Las Vegas, or Atlantic City.

Eyeing shortcuts

It's something to think about as locations look to shortcuts in attracting increased earnings. As for the less than welcome addition of organized crime into video games, no industry is perfect and economic facts tend to support the belief that this element is almost everywhere. But the powers that be—AMOA, AGMA, and all the rest—must remain sensitive to the threat of what this involvement could mean.

I offer no moral judgments here or an unrealistic answer to the problem, because there is none. Just be aware that it exists and could get out of control if the industry were to turn its back on any occurrences such as the one in New York City. •

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From BeBop to Bobby Sox . . .

By Bill Kurtz

'50s-Themed Arcade Awards Prizes For Game Play

In the not-too-distant future, families might do more than just play games in arcades.

After they've had a meal in the arcade's dining area, mom and dad can enjoy some old-fashioned target bowlers while the kids play the videos. And when the family leaves, they won't go home empty-handed They might take a clock-radio, a toaster oven, or even a TV set with them.

And if they don't have time to select their prize in the game room, they can shop at home with the arcade's prize catalog.

Sound far-fetched? Not really. The concept is already being tried in Bobby Sox, an arcade/restaurant which opened in August in a Columbus, Ohio, suburb.

Bobby Sox is operated by R.N.D. Inc. R.N.D. Chairman David Glimcher said the future of the coin-op industry lies in attracting a broader range of players to more long-term amusement equipment, rather than hoping for a hit video that will appeal to teens for a few months.

Bobby Sox is a step in that direction, an effort to expand the player base and let people leave the arcade feeling they've gotten something for their money.

Bobby Sox is also one of the first arcades to feature "The Redeemer," a gadget which dispenses prize tickets from video games. Glimcher said this device will not only boost revenue on low earning videos but bring a family atmosphere to the location.

"Players like to know that they can get something for playing the games," he said. "They can win things for themselves and for others, which makes the games more socially acceptable."

Bobby Sox, which Glimcher describes as "primarily a restaurant that offers entertainment," recreates the atmosphere of the 1950s with flashing neon window signs, a black and white checkered floor, and an old-fashioned soda fountain. There's a reproduction 1940s jukebox near the door playing tunes like "Rock Around the Clock" and "At The Hop."

And the menu features "All Shook Up Shakes," "The Duck Tail" (a charbroiled boneless chicken sandwich),and "The Hound Dog" (a jumbo hot dog)—and, of course, cherry cokes

The Redeemer dispenses prize tickets

"Somebody needed to come up with an answer to the tremendous number of old video games out there, and this will bring back their earning capability."

David Glimcher, chairman of R.N.D. Inc., a Columbus, Ohio-based operator and distributor, said his company's new product will create a new market for old amusement games that operators have long since given up on.

Glimcher's hopes are pinned on "The Redeemer"—a device which dispenses prize tickets from video and pinball games in much the same way as target bowlers and *Skee-balls* have done for years.

"We asked ourselves the question 'What has been successful in the game industry for years?' and came up with the idea of a video ticket dispenser," said Glimcher.

Glimcher said The Redeemer met with an "unbelievable response" when it was shown at the AMOA Show and the units are now back-ordered for 10 to 12 weeks.

He said there has been a reported weekly earnings increase from 100 to 300 percent over previous collections on games in which The Redeemer has been installed.

According to Glimcher, The Redeemer is intended for once-popular games that are now doing poorly—games like *Galaxian* and *Asteroids*. A player who has given up on these machines after perfecting his skills may be drawn back if he can win prize tickets for high scores.

"There are only a few games—the newer ones like *Star Wars* and *Pole Position*—that are doing better without the ticket dispenser than the older games which have The Redeemer," he said. "Our *Pac-Man* with The Redeemer is doing two and a half times better than the *Ms. Pac-Man* without the ticket dispenser."

On the other hand, top earners like *Dragon's Lair* and *Pole Position* wouldn't need The Redeemer installed for a few months, until collections began dropping.

Player incentive

He said that for the last few years, when arcade business was booming, operators could put in nearly any video game and make money. Now that revenue is dropping, arcades have to offer incentives to the players.

According to Glimcher, The

Redeemer can be installed in any video or pinball game in about an hour. A ticket dispensing slot must be cut in the cabinet because the device itself is located inside the machine so there isn't any external unit hooked to the game which can be damaged by vandals.

Glimcher said The Redeemer was developed by an independent engineer, and the exclusive rights to manufacture and market the device were secured by R.N.D.

He said R.N.D. will sell The Redeemer for about $400 as an operator-installed kit. R.N.D.'s distributing subsidiary, The Game Connection, will also install The Redeemer on some of its used videos and have these complete ticket dispensing games available for sale.

And the name "The Redeemer" is also significant because the device dispenses tickets which can be redeemed for prizes. Not only that, but the unit may "redeem" the value of old games, saving them from oblivion.

Glimcher said The Redeemer is able to dispense tickets at several operator-set score levels. Because of this adjustability, a *Space Invaders* game, for example, can be set to spit out a ticket at 250, 500, 750, 1,000, and 1,500 points, so that even an expert player who can stay at a game for an hour is limited in the number of tickets he can win.

Redeemer benefits

Another benefit of The Redeemer, Glimcher said, is that it will bring older players back into arcades by making the games seem more "socially acceptable" by offering the player something in return for his quarter. "Ticket redemption is important, because based upon his level of skill, a player can win tickets and then prizes," he said.

Glimcher said he sees ticket redemption as one of the most important ways for arcade operators to survive now that the video boom is over. He also said more traditional arcade games such as target bowlers (similar to *Skee-Balls*) are essential to bring in a greater diversity of players

"We've got to bring in mom and dad and the family to the arcades, because now most 28 to 70 year-olds are intimidated by modern video games," he said. "Game rooms used to appeal to 5 to 15-year-olds before, but now we're getting more people in their 20s, 30s, and 40s."

Another advantage to operating traditional arcade equipment is the return on investment, especially if the game dispenses prize tickets, which Glimcher said encourages repeat play. Along with attracting a wider range of players, he said target bowlers provide stability because they don't have to be rotated as videos do.

Long-term investments

"In order for an operator to stay in business, he should look for stability in long-term investments," he said. "Videos bring in the fast money, but most earnings should be in basics.

"A 10 percent return on investment is very good today," he added. "Even 2 percent is good today. The long-term return on investment is what's important to be noted here."

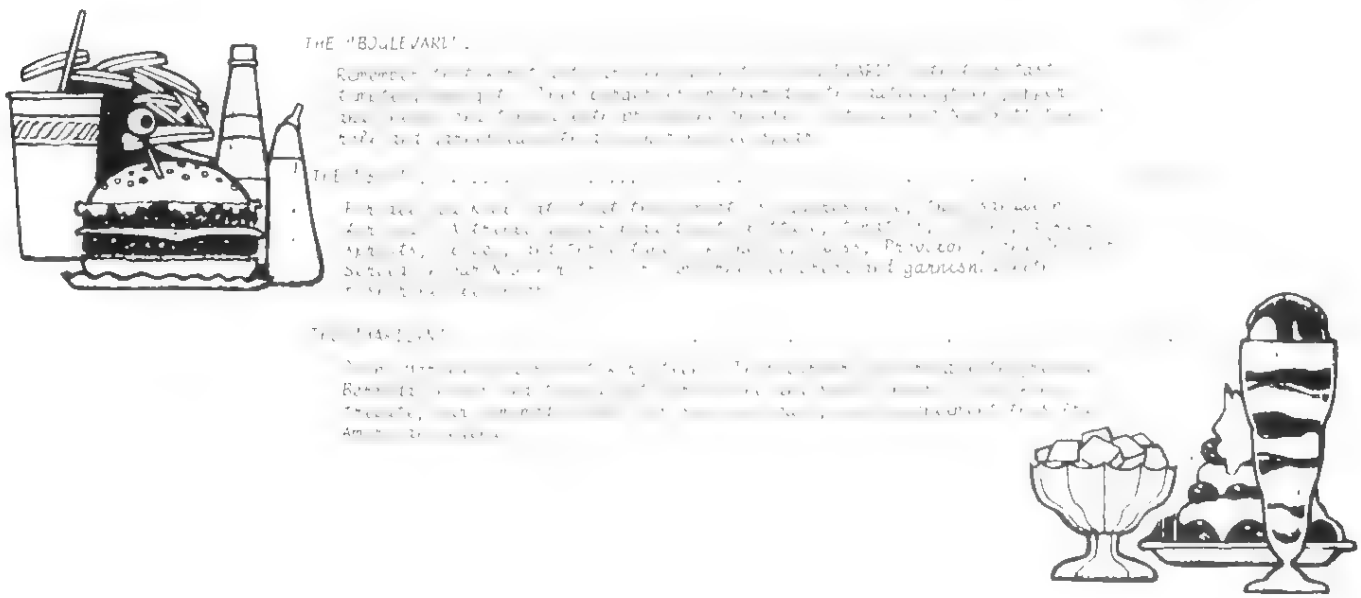
Glimcher said that "game rooms have never been in the retail business," but offering prizes for high video game scores will pay off for operators. "Arcades will need more than just games to survive," he said.

Although some operators may scoff at the idea of awarding prizes for video game play, The Redeemer is designed not so much to fill the cash boxes of top-earning games but to reinterest players in older machines.

But like everything else in arcade management, operators should be sure their redemption centers are well stocked and properly organized. No matter how easily they can win tickets, players will demand a good variety of reasonably priced prizes for ticket redemption to be successful

The Redeemer could be just the "ticket" to give operators long-term stability in their amusement games.•

—By Bill Kurtz



Bobby Sox's menu even gives patrons the flavor of the '50s. The dining area encourages patrons to spend more time and money in the location.

Restaurant's setup

Also featured is the restaurant's customized condiment bar, to complement the burgers and hot dogs, rather than the salad bars in most restaurants

There's also a private party room in the basement which holds 50 people. This lower level, which offers the same type of food, music, and games as the main floor, was booked for five parties the first week Bobby Sox opened, Glimcher said.

And there are several tables with sun umbrellas with seating for 15 on the sidewalk outside, plus an indoor seating capacity of 66

About one third of the 2,200 square foot area is devoted to games, which bring in about one-third of the location's revenue.

Glimcher said he and his partners, Rick Reinhorn and Benson Schecter, hit on the idea of a '50s-themed location as a way to get the entire family to come in, with the inducement of taking home large prizes like TVs and stereos as a way to get them to return.

"We saw that people have started moving back to a more conservative time and are coming back to old-time standards," Glimcher said. "We saw Bobby Sox as a way to bring back the family element

"We also wanted a clean, sharp-looking establishment, not a place that looks conducive to hanging out," he said. "Bobby Sox bridges the gap between the fast food and the more expensive sit-down restaurants."

Glimcher noted that several of R.N.D.'s principals have food service backgrounds along with arcade experience. Schecter, director of operations for advertising and promotion for R.N.D., and general manager of Bobby Sox, previously ran a major restaurant in Florida.

Glimcher believes traditional equipment not only brings in a greater variety of players, but also offers equipment stability.

Target group

Glimcher said most restaurants try targeting to a specific age group—either families with children, children alone, or adults alone. If they're lucky, these restaurants will appeal to two of these groups, but rarely all three. Glimcher thinks Bobby Sox has the magic formula to appeal to all of these groups.

"Our biggest problem was—would adults come into the same establishment with games?" he said.

Apparently they are. Glimcher said The Redeemer is attracting as many adults as children to the older games. He said adults may be more "value conscious" than teens and like the idea of getting something back for their money.

Music is another important element in Bobby Sox, Glimcher said. "We put something on the jukebox for all ages, from songs of the '30s and '40s, to two or three of the top 10 hits of the '80s, along with the '50s songs. Music transcends time."

But not everything in Bobby Sox is a throwback. Glimcher said the menu is family-oriented, with selections like tuna fish and grilled cheese sandwiches, rather than relying on fast food, a product of the 1960s and '70s

And the sit-down waitress service at Bobby Sox is also more family-oriented than burgers served on plastic trays.

"There were some things in the '50s that we didn't want to tie into," said Reinhorn, R.N.D. president. "We don't want to lock ourselves into the '50s, but be able to flow into the '40s or '60s, depending on what the customers want."

The Redeemer

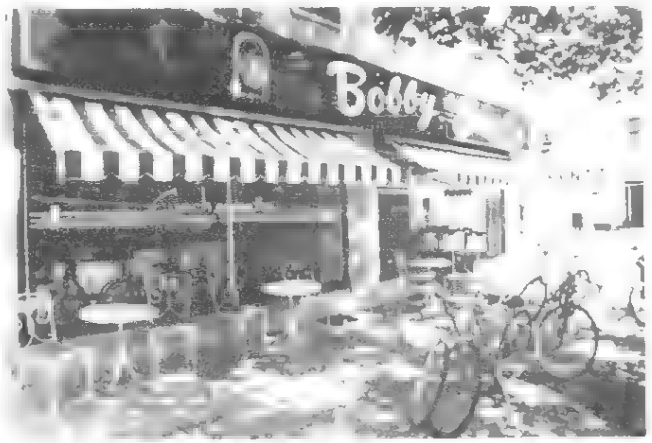
Glimcher said the video ticket dispenser—The Redeemer—is itself a kind of update on the '50s, one which he hopes will help put more families into "family fun centers." (See related story.)

"Supermarkets and gas stations used to give trading stamps, and cigarettes used to offer prize coupons. The Redeemer works on that same idea," he said. "When the economy got better in the '70s, coupons were no longer given away."

He said the idea of having big prizes available at Bobby Sox is unusual, but that useful items for family use should attract a greater variety of players than the little trinkets most arcades offer.

Glimcher said Bobby Sox was presented to city officials as a restaurant rather than a game room, which would have required a special operating permit in its suburban Bexley location.

The location was picked because it's near Capitol University and Bexley High School, easily accessible to several interstate highways and close to R.N.D.'s corporate offices. And besides that, Glimcher, Rein-



Bobby Sox features sidewalk tables with sun umbrellas to seat about 15 patrons. The indoor seating capacity is 66

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horn, and Schecter all live in Bexley. Glimcher added that Bobby Sox has no major competition in the area, either from arcades or similar restaurants.

Easily promoted

Bobby Sox's location also lends itself to several promotions. A few doors down the street is the Drexell Theater, a revival movie house often featuring vintage '50s films. Glimcher said the theater's late-night customers often stop into Bobby Sox after the movies.

He added that a 1950s block party/sock hop may be held in conjunction with the theater, with prices "rolled back to the '50s."

However, Glimcher said Bobby Sox may not need to stage any promotions, at least not right away. "We have enough business now just by walk-ins."

In fact, even Glimcher was surprised by the volume during the first two weeks of business. "We wanted to open up the doors and work out our operations during this time so we didn't do any advertising, but the response has still been tremendous."

Bobby Sox is the prototype location for what Glimcher said will be "the major future operation of R.N.D."

He said two more Bobby Sox locations will open in Columbus in the next 18 months with franchises then available throughout Ohio or even nationwide.

R.N.D.—which stands for Rick (Reinhorn) N (and) David (Glimcher)—is actually a combination operator/distributor, with the food service aspect of Bobby Sox its first non-amusement game operation.

R.N.D operates in more than 400 street locations, what Glimcher called a "businessman's route,"—in convenience food stores and discount stores, rather than bars and bowling alleys.

R.N.D. ventures

Another major operating venture is the Beepz arcade chain. Glimcher said there are 10 Beepz arcades located in Ohio and surrounding states.

He said R.N.D. has "100 percent control of what's going on" in these arcades, and although each has an individual manager, Glimcher said he takes a personal interest in each

of the Beepz locations and visits them frequently.

Although the Beepz chain, which was started a couple of years ago, is doing well, Glimcher said R.N.D. will be working on opening Bobby Sox ticket-redemption locations in the future rather than additional Beepz units. He added that about half of the Beepz locations have ticket redemption centers

Another R.N D enterprise is The Game Connection, a distributing operation. Along with used video and pinball games, The Game Connection handles several lines of new equipment

But one of the most unique aspects of R.N.D. is that it handles all phases of a redemption center's operation. R.N.D. sells everything an arcade operator needs to set up a completely-stocked redemption center.

For example, for $1,795, an operator can buy a 6-foot long metal and glass prize showcase, a 32 square foot redemption center base unit complete with pegboard and metal piping for support, and a canvas awning for the front of the redemption center (personalized lettering is extra)

R N.D. even sells the prizes to be distributed in the redemption center—everything from the ever popular stuffed animals (a staple of every arcade's ticket redemption) to "folding frisbees" to Walkman headset radios

Coin-op games have come a long way since the "Bobby Sox" era of the 1950s, when Gottlieb's *Gypsy Queen* pinball was king and Wurlitzer jukeboxes in every location blared Teen Angel.'

But maybe it's time for operators to try attracting the "older" players back to the arcades with the kind of games they grew up with. After all, if it weren't for those players in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s, this industry would never have survived until the '80s. •

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BUSHNELL UNVEILS THE SENTE SYSTEM

By Valerie Cognevich

The date was December 9. It was a dreary day in San Jose, California, as the clock ticked off the minutes until 10:08 a.m., a date and time industry members had waited for patiently. Nolan Bushnell, founder of Sente, was about to unveil his well-kept secret the industry had been tantalized with since the AMOA Show where a large brown box brought curious stares. Major distributors from all over the country gathered to share in the unveiling.

At 10:00 a.m. a slide presentation related the inefficiencies and the high risk involved in the business today. And then, with major TV stations' cameras focused on a box, the lights dimmed, the clock showed 10:08 a.m., and Bushnell emerged from the box amid a roar of applause.

Bushnell proceeded to explain the new marketing strategy in detail, the major thrust of Sente that until now had only brought speculation.

The Sente System (SAC or Sente Arcade Computer) is a program whereby the game frame is purchased and the software (games) is rented. The distributor leases the games from Sente, and the operator rents the games from the distributor. This system, according to Bushnell, would eliminate the risk involved in purchasing new games. If the operator installs the cartridge and the game doesn't meet earning expectations (which Bushnell said Sente games are unlikely to do), the operator can simply return the cartridge and get another one.

The cartridge driven system is very simple to change, Bushnell said. "We felt that the only way was to have it so the whole conversion could be accomplished by an unskilled, untrained person in less than 15 minutes. We can replace two teamsters in a pickup truck and forklift with an attractive young lady in a Pinto that is cheaper and more fun to have around!"

And since Bushnell claims the system is simple to install, operators would have the option of offering seasonal games. Around Halloween, an arcade could change several of its units to a Halloween-themed game. The possibilities are many, Bushnell noted. "We've increased the possi-

This page: This was the view upon entering Sente's warehouse for a banquet, appropriately decorated in a jungle theme. The snake, of course, depicted Snake Pit, *the first game in the Sente System*
Opposite page, Top: TV stations interviewed distributors as they emerged from the presentation
Center: Nolan Bushnell answers a myriad of questions posed by national magazines such as Newsweek *and local media*
Bottom: Nolan Bushnell, explaining the new "Sente Solution," addresses a large audience.

bility for specialization. People will have the feeling that they need to come down during a certain period of time or they are going to miss the special game of the season.

Comparing industries

"If theaters operated the same way the video game business operates, the theater structure would be blown up each time the movie was changed," Bushnell said, comparing the industries. "If that happened, the cost structure of the movie business would be such that the only thing that the movies could afford to do would be show movies in tents with folding chairs. But if they did that, there would probably be very few people going to the movies. That's what we've been doing—blowing up the capital."

Distributors will be required to make a large commitment to Sente to become a Sente distributor, Bushnell said, addressing the distributors. "A Sente distributor needs exclusivity, enhancement, and capability. You're going to be the elite in the coin machine business because I believe that we will ultimately dominate the industry. There will only be 35 territories. There will be a territorial license fee—that's money and a strong commitment. We want people in our system that are willing to change, who are willing to help lead this business into a new future."

Many distributors *Play Meter* interviewed agreed with Bushnell's

Bill Kraft of Shaffer Distributing and Jim Libby of Peach State chat about Sente's unique marketing concept

Michael Green of U.S. Billiards and Ron Gold of Cleveland Coin attended the showing held in a warehouse converted to a jungle paradise

Jerry Gordon of Rowe, Jon Brady of Brady Distributing, and Frank Ash of Action Amusements enjoy the banquet with distributors from across the country

comments. "Coin machine history was made today. The industry as we know it today will change," one distributor said.

"Bushnell has given distributors a shot of adrenaline. He has put some enthusiasm back into the industry," another explained. "I have to encourage my employees, but I need someone to encourage me!"

"This could revolutionize the industry. All manufacturers will probably be going with this type of system in the future," another distributor predicted. (See related story for questions distributors asked Bushnell.)

Bushnell said that Sente will be committed for four new software games per year, though he felt it may release more. The first game, which was previewed at the presentation, is *Snake Pit*. Attendees generally commented that it's a fun game to play. One distributor noted that the game looks simple enough for women to get involved in play but difficult enough to capture the attention of other players.

Distributors viewed other Sente projects. They toured Sente's engineering facility, and its expansive facilities reinforced Bushnell's claims of commitment to the industry.

Advertising

Another interesting feature of the Sente System is that part of the rental money from the software will be devoted to a national advertising campaign.

Said Bushnell, "If we take the movie theater analogy again, could you possibly think of a single movie that would be brought to the public without a significant advertising campaign? The answer is no. Why have we relied on the editorial press to create an image for us? And the answer to that is fundamentally that the manufacturer has had no economic incentive to advertise to the public. If he did, he would want to advertise before the games were sold. But before the games are sold, how are the people going to go down to the corner drugstore and play the games?"

Bushnell continued, "Anyway, we have relied on editorial press because the manufacturer hasn't had the incentive because the games aren't on location when the eco-

nomic incentive for him to advertise happens. So Sente will create an image for itself through a meaningful advertising campaign."

Conclusion

Nolan Bushnell has started something that has potential for becoming a strong force in the industry. And he has a knack for promotion which this industry sorely lacks. He sparked enthusiasm in the distributors—even through the staging of the showing. A jungle paradise featuring live animals was the setting for the Sente announcement

However, some distributors are apprehensive, and there are many questions to be answered about the Sente System. (Look for a status report on the SAC system in a future issue of *Play Meter*.)

One distributor summed up the feelings of many when he said, "Nolan has introduced a concept that is worth trying, but there are still some unanswered questions. Future development is the most important thing. If Sente does not come out with some dramatically good games, there is no way the system will amount to anything." •

Distributors quiz Bushnell

Are you planning on going into the home consumer division?

No, I am not. I have sold game rights to our games to Atari, and I believe that that's a better way. It isn't a good time to get into that business. I might add that there will be a suitable cooling off period before the games are available for the home, so chances are the games will probably be off the street routes by the time the home version hits.

What type of testing program will you have?

We will do focus groups and probably a minimum of 2 months on location. But remember the cost of change is so minimal. Change is important; it's something that's no longer a risk factor. Hey, if you don't like the game, chuck it out—get a new one. You can do a re-release.

Will SAC PACs be introduced into the Pizza Time game rooms at the same time they're going to be introduced after the marketing program? Will they be introduced concurrently?

They will. The Pizza Time company stores and franchises will get shipments slightly before, but it's only going to be a matter of a short time. That's going to be part of the testing program.

To what extent are the game frames and game cartridges protected by patent from competition, from possible competing suppliers of cartridges that might be compatible?

Nothing is perfect. It's all what I call measures and countermeasures. We will be putting in more tricky things in six months than we have now, and we'll be putting in more tricky things after that. We'll protect ourselves and you from the unscrupulous among us. The idea is to make sure that the people who cheat on the system go out of business, and I think that we can do that by constantly doing some bobbing and weaving and head faking technologically. We really are convinced that slowly but surely this system will replace the traditional buy-a-game-put-it-on-location business. I think this weeding out process will probably take a two-year period.

Will it legally be possible for third parties to create software for Sente hardware?

There's no legal way you can stop it. I don't understand, however, what the economic advantage would be for anyone to do that. Once an operator opts out of the system, he can't get back in. If he were to opt out of the system and go with somebody else's, he'd have to depend on that source from then on. I don't think it's going to make any sense. However, if someone wants to be a third party software supplier, we will distribute that software through the Sente system, but it will have to go through our factory.

Will Sente license games from other people and other concepts?

Yes. We're going to be good businessmen. If someone else has the best idea, we're going to embrace it with a great big bear hug. We want the best, the brightest, the fastest, the smartest, and the funnest. And we will allow no compromise.

Do you expect other manufacturers to get into this same kind of product?

Yes, I've been copied all my life, so I don't expect anything to change. I do believe, however, that they are going to be behind We'll have a larger overall base of players which will allow us to do some things technologically that will make it very difficult for them to compete. This is going to be a first out with the most wins kind of ball game.

And once we have the most out, we can spend more money on advertising, spend more money on marketing, and really solidify our position. I would expect that some of the competitors will have game systems out within 6 months of ours, but I don't believe that they can bring the creativity to bear on the problem that we can. We've just got too good of a staff. Who are you going to rely on for an ongoing streak of software?

I think history has shown the creativity of the other sections of the market is pretty dismal, and I think an operator is going to have a hard time placing an awful lot of trust in the non-creative, non-innovative manufacturing side. I think the very fact that they will be copying the system will be evidence of their lack of creativity. And I think it's a harder sell. •

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PIZZA TIME THEATRE 'ZAPP'S' CHUCK E. CHEESE

By Mary Claire Blakeman

NOTE: Play Meter *got a sneak preview of this new marketing concept featuring food, alcohol, and coin-op equipment. This concept will probably undergo many changes, but is it a trend for the industry?*

The piano-playing moose is gone and so are the squeals of little children running to stuff their tokens into kiddie rides.

They have been replaced by a parquet dance floor, tastefully arranged hanging plants, and most importantly, by a crowd of young, mostly single people out for a good time.

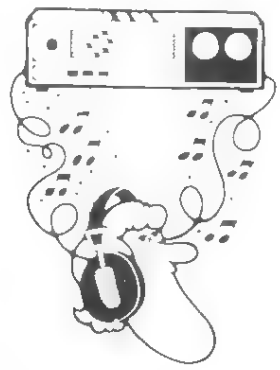
The video games are still there and so is the pizza. But unless you knew otherwise, you could never tell that the location had once been the home of Chuck E Cheese.

The Chuck E. Cheese unit in a Cupertino, California, shopping center was put to sleep last May only to be reawakened a short time later as Zapp's, the first location in a new franchising venture from Pizza Time Theatre.

Zapp's is the brainchild of Nolan Bushnell, well known in the industry as the progenitor of *Pong* and the man who brought new visibility to video games by combining them with food in the Pizza Time Theatre concept. But with a slow economy, the slump in game play, and food that was good but not spectacular, Pizza Time Theatre started losing money in 1983. Almost 10 of its 260 units in the United States closed, although the company is moving ahead with plans to open others in Puerto Rico, Singapore, and eventually, Europe.

The Cupertino site was among the closed units, but company spokesman John Porter says it was turned into Zapp's because the San Jose area already had two other Chuck E. Cheese locations.

It was not due to a sales slump, Porter says. "This is something we've wanted to do for a while and, in terms of locations, the opportunity came along. There are a lot of single people in that area, and that's a big part of the market for Zapp's."



Zapp's audience

Singles, single parents, and young adults are the main audience Zapp's attracts. An ideal location, according to the company's demographics, is one with a high population density of 21 to 45-year-olds.

"Zapp's provides a good way to meet people," says Jim Musgrove, director of operations for Zapp's. "It's an excuse to have fun and meet each other in a casual relaxed atmosphere."

Porter adds that part of the idea for Zapp's stemmed from Bushnell's experience with his first video game which started out in a Silicon Valley tavern. "There have been arcades and there have been bars, but the two haven't been put together well," Porter says. "Zapp's covers a lot of bases. We see it as another entertainment niche."

Zapp's does cover the bases. It has food, drinks, video games, pinball, shuffleboard, pool tables, bumper pool, chess, checkers, backgammon, two dance floors, MTV, an Excuse Booth, a 14-foot television screen for special events, darts, coin-operated ice hockey games, and even monitors for videotapes in the bathrooms. (The women get male strippers from Chippendale's while the men get scenes from a topless bar or a sexy aerobic exercise class.)

While it may sound like a lot, it doesn't look it because the 10,000 square feet of Zapp's is broken up into comfortable sections, and tall ceilings add to the spacious feeling. (Of course, on a crowded Friday or Saturday night, it may be hard to appreciate the roomy design, but Zapp's looks like it can hold many more people than the fire marshall's capacity limit of 300.)

At the entrance to Zapp's, a three-piece suited greeter checks identification cards since patrons must be 21 to

enter after 5 p.m. Not all employees at Zapp's are dressed so formally, and the employee uniform is usually maroon T-shirts with matching running shorts or black slacks. A neon "Zapp's" sign also hovers near the entrance, and the Cabaret area beckons patrons as they first walk in. With a dance floor, candle-lit tables, and a screen for MTV or other videotapes, the Cabaret can be a quiet area or, occasionally, the site of group parties.

Video screens throughout

The video screen in the Cabaret area is only one of several dotting the club. "There's almost no vantage point in the place where you can't see a screen," says Dennis Rosner, general manager of the Cupertino Zapp's.

While the Cupertino location is the first, it may not be the exact prototype for Zapp's to come. The company opened its second Zapp's in Tampa, Florida, in the beginning of October and schedules one for Dallas after that. Each location will have its own modifications. For instance, the Dallas site will have larger dance floors, while Tampa features a separate dining area and nine red-curtained private dining booths instead of three as in the Cupertino unit.

"We're working on a modular system eventually," says Jim Musgrove, "but we want to do various things in each store to see how broad-based the appeal is and to see what adjustments are needed. We want to analyze the concept quickly and with the explosive growth of Pizza Time Theatre we had not had that analytical capability. So now we want to look at it carefully."

Musgrove says the company is working with Kerr Marketing of San Jose, Stanford University, and the University of South Florida. Musgrove predicts there will be four or five units opened by the first of the year, and the idea eventually will grow into a full-fledged chain.

It's a continuously evolving concept," Musgrove adds. "It will always change. We're not just limiting ourselves to video game players; we're purveying fun."

While analysts have speculated that video games accounted for 50 percent of the income from Chuck E. Cheese units, Cupertino Zapp's manager Rosner and others in the company say the coin-ops provide about 20 to 30 percent of the revenues. Zapp's features all the latest games with *Dragon's Lair* and *Pole Position* leading in coin drops during the fall. Shuffleboard tables have proven surprisingly popular along with novelty pieces such as a Bio Rhythm machine.

Service personnel

Zapp's managers make a game report each week, reading the meters on various machines. A "Fun Dial Monitor," an employee on duty most hours, takes care of minor problems. "The monitor takes care of what we call 'soft' downs," Rosner says. "That's for things like a coin jam or something. If we have a 'hard' down, technicians come in to work on the games."

Besides strategically located dollar changing machines, patrons can get free tokens with food or drinks. The menu ranges from pizza, hamburgers, and salads to quiche and "finger" foods such as potato skins and nachos.

Manager Rosner is drawn from the restaurant ranks and has had experience at Victoria Station. He says other managers will be trained at the Cupertino site. Critics of Pizza Time have said that Bushnell and his staff may know games, but they need experience with food and beverages so perhaps the Zapp's training program will help.

In the drink department, Zapp's offers beer, hard liquor, and a variety of margaritas, daiquiris, and a Zapp ta. The bar also runs special promotions such as "Miller Lite Nite" or "Captain Rum Punch night." On some evenings, women can get shots of Schnapps for one dollar, and it is called the "Buck Schnapps here" special. Next to the 14-foot television screen there is a list of other specials offered during sporting events for particular plays such as home runs or touchdowns. Sometimes patrons can get beer at half price when athletes perform a special feat. "When Carl Yastrzemski hit a grand slam homer in the All Star game, we gave a round of beer on the house," Rosner says.

Just below the big screen in the Cupertino Zapp's is another unique feature, the "Tunnel of Love." The tunnel is a low ceilinged, fully carpeted area where people are invited to sit with a member of the opposite sex, get "zapped," and emerge as a master game player. Becoming a great game player is part of the mystique of Zapp's and its namesake. "Captain Zapp," a dark-haired mustachioed figure, is supposed to be the greatest player in the world.

As patrons and Pizza Time management admit, the real game at Zapp's is boy meets girl and so far it looks like the idea works. "It's not an intimidating scene," Rosner says. "You can come in here with any number of predispositions and can find a way to amuse yourself."

Many activities

Susan, a 23-year-old secretary who comes to Zapp's, agrees that the games offer a good diversion. "I like it," she says. "You're not confined to just doing one thing."

Mike, a transplanted Eastener in his 30s, says Zapp's atmosphere is conducive to friendly conversations, even among men. "The guys are not so competitive as they are in other places, and you can talk to each other and play pool or shuffleboard," he says. "It's not so much of a 'meat market' as other places."

Another Zapp's patron adds that "If you strike out, the evening isn't shot completely because there's the games and other stuff."

But Mike offers an assessment that may point to the real possibilities of success for Zapp's. "Look at who has the money," he says. "With Chuck E. Cheese, the parents have to pay, and they will only give their kids a certain amount. Face it, kids only have so much money." •

Gottlieb Changes Name But Legacy Endures

By Roger C. Sharpe

There are many who don't remember that Esso and Humble Oil were known suddenly one day as Exxon, that Esmark became a corporate name for many other recognizable companies, and that, closer to home, Gremlin disappeared under the Sega umbrella and Chicago Coin became Stern Electronics in 1977. Even the old Allied Leisure was transformed into Centuri

It happens in the business world often. Corporate names are changed because of takeovers by other companies and the feeling that a change in image is needed. However, normally, "personal" names are not shunted aside if they still represent a history or reputation within an industry.

But times and attitudes change regarding the value of a corporate name's heritage, and, as a result, it slowly drifts from view. This isn't to suggest that Williams Manufacturing didn't make a smooth transition over to Williams Electronics when technology demanded a more contemporary flavor D. Gottlieb & Company, however, has suffered a different fate due to, undoubtedly, new ownership over the years. Maybe the sentimentality or reputation attached to Gottlieb's name no longer seemed valid to the company's owners.

The only problem I had initially when I heard about the Mylstar announcement (that Gottlieb's name was changed to Mylstar) was that the Gottlieb name seemed to be so much a part of the coin-op world. Admittedly, it was a reputation built on pinball machines and we're now entrenched in a laser disc age, but the Gottlieb name didn't seem to hinder the receptivity and success of that recent video standout, *Q*Bert*. But then this is an outside view and it doesn't take into account discussions that took place regarding this name change

I suppose the name change might have been viewed as a way to break away from an old regime, or the belief that Gottlieb somehow stood for a conservative, stodgy, and antiquated philosophy And what better way to convey a sense of change, via advertising campaigns and other corporate programs, than via a name change

David Gottlieb (left) sometimes had to sleep in cheap hotels and keep a gun under his pillow when he was young. However when son Alvin Gottlieb (right) joined his father in business, he had a company that was a respected leader in the coin-op field

We all saw the black, silver, and red ads announcing that "D. Gottlieb & Co. is preparing for a future even brighter and more innovative than our past." To reflect the changes, a new name was chosen, one which we were told "was created to evoke a vision that is brilliant, far-reaching, and unique."

Change hard to accept

Well, somehow I can accept a Cassius Clay changing to Muhammad Ali or even Lew Alcindor becoming Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, but somehow I can't readily swallow this change. Gottlieb just meant, and means, too much to just let it get cast aside without some type of review and salute to a company and a family which not only symbolized the amusement game industry, but also became synonymous with the very life blood and evolution of the business Now, Bally is the only corporate name which remains from Depression days

When I first discovered coin-op games in my adult life, the primary attraction was pinball. And the company with the games that I found so special was D. Gottlieb & Co. I knew nothing about the manufacturer, and even less about the industry, but as a player I knew what I liked and Gottlieb pins always seemed to be the most enjoyable. There were games such as *Cow-Poke*, *Subway*, and *Majorettes* They planted the seed which would grow years later when I began my research for *Pinball!*

In fact, the first pinball machine I ever got was the free play version of *Cow-Poke* called *Buckaroo*, only because I couldn't find an add-a-ball machine. But this didn't matter because that playfield with its roto-spin was still there along with the lineup of seven numbers and a backglass where a horse would kick a cowboy and send him spinning.

It was only when I started to research the industry via interviews and old publications that I finally discovered just what a major role Gottlieb had played in the very existence and perpetuation of the coin-operated amusement business. Here was a true family operation led by a strong and dynamic personality—David Gottlieb.

Born in Milwaukee, David Gottlieb was running punch boards in the oil fields of Texas back in the 1920s. Short in height (5-foot six), but not stature, this young man in his early 20s would travel from town to town in the cabooses of freight trains. He slept in cheap hotels with a gun under his pillow and a dresser pushed up against the door.

When movies became the new form of entertainment, Gottlieb began showing D.W. Griffith films such as "Intolerance" and "Birth of a Nation" to every town he came to, sometimes setting up his own projector in a town hall when no other facilities were available. Moving back to Chicago to set up business with his brother Sol, David Gottlieb saw a new opportunity and seized the moment.

An industry's birth

It was late in 1931, and after having manufactured various novelty machines, including the *Husky-Grip Tester* and the *Majestic Moving Target*, Gottlieb

produced a little countertop game called *Baffle Ball* and a new industry was humbly born. Enlisting the help of his brother, his wife, and his wife's brother, David Gottlieb had his company producing up to 400 machines a day with operations normally running around the clock.

As the popularity for these new novelty games increased, so too did the number of individuals who were drawn in the industry with expectations of capitalizing on the expanding boom. However, there were some who embellished on the Gottlieb invention to broaden its appeal and audience. One method which developed was the addition of an automatic pay-out mechanism, turning novelty entertainment and amusement into a more gambling-directed venture.

Although he did dabble a bit in this area of game design, Gottlieb quickly turned away from this format and remained staunchly committed to innocent fun. And as the industry began to feel the repercussions of this guilt-by-association and public opinion denounced the entire coin-op industry, Gottlieb tried as best he could to weather the storm.

Fortunately, for the business at least, a war intervened and turned attention back to more important issues. Factories of this Chicago-based industry were changed into war munitions and material plants, and thoughts of the future were put on hold.

However, after the battles ended and life tried to return to normalcy, Gottlieb was ready to begin anew. But the world had changed and so too had society's taste for amusement games. Something different was needed to lead to the future. The old ideas and designs were no longer enough to sustain interest and many former major powers in the industry, already devastated by years of inactivity in producing their livelihood, could no longer rebound. Only a few remained to continue the cause and keep any flickering dreams alive.

D. Gottlieb & Co. was one of those companies, and in 1947 this manufacturer once again took the lead when it introduced flippers on a game called *Humpty Dumpty*. Pinball was suddenly, and forever, transformed into a more challenging, skillful, and interactive form of entertainment, and players soon noticed the change and flocked to see and try the new innovation.

A respected company

With Alvin Gottlieb joining his father, adding yet another generation to this founding enterprise, the company began to gain a reputation for dependable, reliable, and solid equipment that attracted both the skilled and novice player. And, as the years passed, D. Gottlieb & Co. grew in stature and respect to the extent that when I first ventured into the world of coin-op back in 1974, there was a type of mystique attached to the Gottlieb presence in the field.

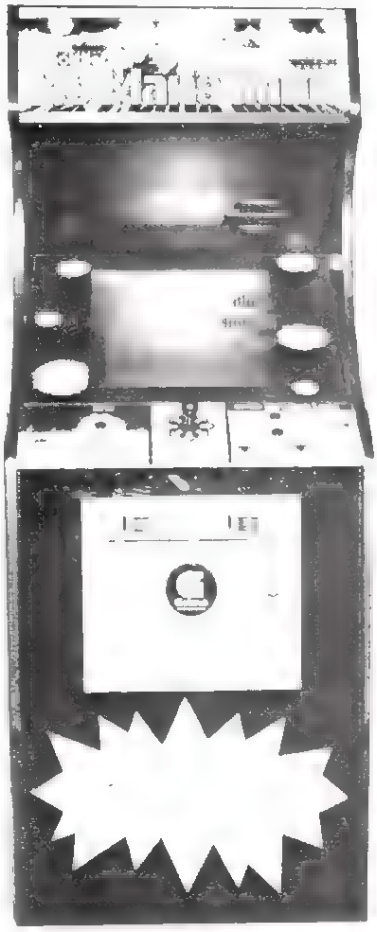
The company was like still water running deep, serving up a nuance or advance on an almost regular basis in terms of playfield components and features, as well as individualized graphics that tended to set Gottlieb apart from the crowd. Admired for the kind of operation it ran, the company was viewed with a measure of envy, reverence, and mystery.

In hindsight, it really wasn't any great secret, only the belief in basic principles which seemed to permeate the equipment produced. Each machine seemed to incorporate some essential element which tended to make it better, or at worst, appealing to the audience of the time. Somehow, as a player, you could expect certain things from a Gottlieb machine which weren't necessarily the same type of tactile and sensory feedback found on other games from competing companies. Gottlieb machines offered a different playing experience that just couldn't be duplicated, while distributors and operators knew they could rely on this manufacturer's products for steady income.

It was the best of both worlds, but there were other developments afoot which would swiftly erode this magnificent base of operations Gottlieb had created. The first sign that the times were changing came about when video games proved to be viable replacement for older novelty and arcade attractions such as gun, digger, and other mechanical machines which were no longer what a new television generation wanted.

The most telling blow, however, was the advent of solid-state electronics into the world of pinball with its flippers, drop targets, spinners, and other staples. After watching its competition get a head start in applying the new technology and perfect individual systems, Gottlieb finally entered back into the race with *Cleopatra* which was introduced amid much hubbub at the AMOA in 1977.

I remember the response to this simplistically designed game with its



Gottlieb's first video, No Man's Land *not produced in house, was introduced at the 1980 AMOA Show. Q*bert was previewed at the 1982 AMOA Show.*

distinctive blue displays. Those members of the industry who had supported D. Gottlieb & Co for so long were relieved the company had delivered a piece for the times. They no longer made excuses for the company such as "They're waiting until they get everything right, you'll see" or "They just don't want to rush into anything."

Game limitation

Well, better late than never, the company had arrived into the present with products that were once again reliable and entertaining for players. However, there were to be other subtleties in game design that Gottlieb didn't, and couldn't, take the lead in due to the electronics system at the core of its machines. It had limitations which were obvious beneath the surface and tended to stifle and restrict development

Then, as pinball began to feel the pressure from a public preoccupied with video, Gottlieb held fast to what it had symbolized for so long: good quality pinball machines. Other companies in the field expanded their sights and, where once a factory might have focused on flipper games, room was being made to include videos

The conservatism which had been a part of the Gottlieb image was only further reinforced when it attempted to ignore the warning signs and go on with business as usual But even this industry giant saw the writing on the wall which said to diversify and broaden operations At the 1980 AMOA, industry members were introduced to *No Man's Land*, the company's first video game

Not an in-house creation, it was at least a beginning and the acknowledgment that Gottlieb had to change with the times. But it had to play catch-up, finally unveiling a home-grown effort, *Reactor*, at the 1982 AOE convention The response wasn't overwhelming although the Gottlieb name still meant something to individuals in the industry, as well as players worldwide

The problem was magnified because the industry was in transition, and so too was D. Gottlieb & Co. Only when *Q*Bert* was introduced in the beginning of 1983, had the company finally turned the corner on the road back There was new ownership and the old guard as well as any tangible links with the past faded. All that remained was a rich heritage and reputation built over generations and decades which, undoubtedly, might have played a more major role in the survival of Gottlieb, during the lean times, than anyone might be willing to imagine and accept

And so I believe the tradition that was once Gottlieb's seems somewhat minimized and weakened by the Mylstar name. Maybe during the next 56 years, this more modern moniker will have the same impact for its time, who knows? However, the Gottlieb name did mean something to this business for many people, and I for one couldn't just stand by and watch it fade quietly from view

To the late, great David Gottlieb, along with his family, friends, and employees over the years, I would like to say thank you for helping to not only give birth to this incredible industry, but for also helping it survive and endure during the hard times when so many others no longer believed in the dream of coin-operated amusement entertainment. It is a legacy none can deny or afford to forget. In fact, it's the kind of stuff that for so many other industries and fields legends are made and then nurtured. So, so long D. Gottlieb & Company. Welcome Mylstar—may your achievements be as meaningful, successful, and lasting in the coming years. •

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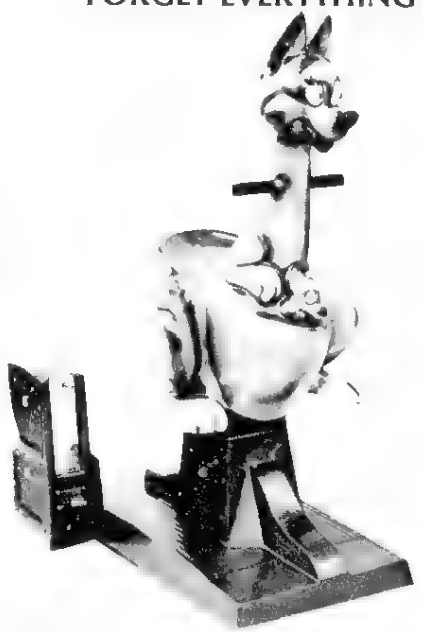

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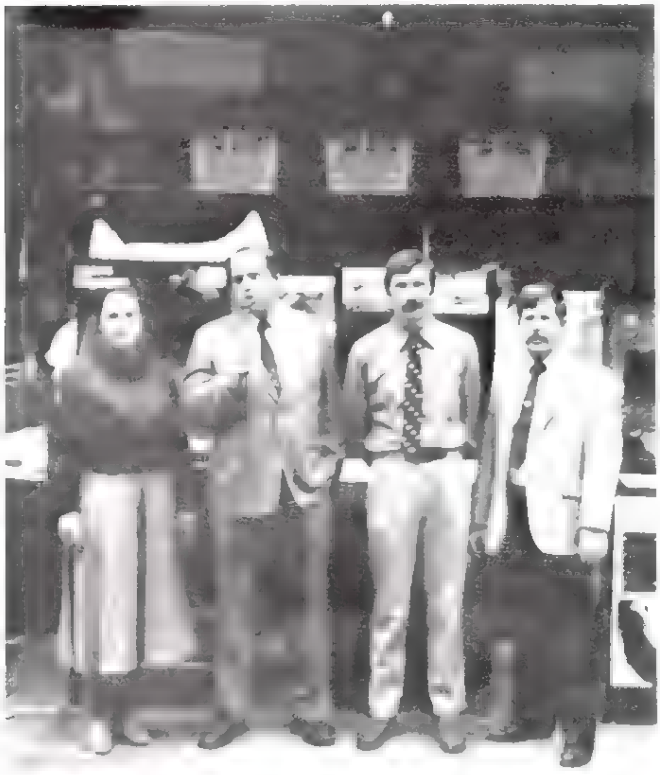
AUCTIONS HELP OPERATORS SURVIVE IN THE '80s

Auctions are an alternative for operators who want to sell and buy used equipment or closeouts. Many operators have attended an auction, but some haven't because there hasn't been one in their area or simply because they don't know how an auction works, how equipment is bought and sold, and how to pay for equipment

There are several auction firms, but to inform operators about the intricacies of an auction, here is an interview with William H. Pearlman, president of NAGA, the National Amusement Game Auction, one successful auction company

Play Meter: *Why sell games at an auction?*
NAGA: The industry needed to establish a marketplace for the purchase and sale of used equipment and closeouts. Operators must be able to turn used games into cash quickly and conveniently in order to be able to purchase new games and operate their businesses profitably. The auction is the perfect vehicle. You can sell 250-300 games in an afternoon. It's exciting, fun, and very convenient. Further you can be sure that you are buying and selling at market price

Play Meter: *What is a video game auction? How does it work?*
NAGA: We collect a total of 250-300 games from various operators and distributors within close proximity to an auction site. We receive the games, clean them, check them out technically, and inventory



NAGA personnel prepare for an auction (left to right): Gail Court, treasurer and head clerk; Bill Pearlman, president; Marty Rich, vice president; and Sam Hanblen, auctioneer.

Here's a look at the Pittsburgh auction held November 19. Two hundred and fifty games were auctioned off.

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them for easy viewing and inspection. By virtue of a rather extensive mailing list, we notify prospective purchasers of the auction. On the day of the auction,we have a professional auctioneer sell each piece to the highest bidder.

Play Meter: *Why should an operator buy at an auction?*
NAGA: There are three reasons: (1) Price. (2) Price. (3) Price. The prices will be $200-$1,200 lower than comparable equipment elsewhere. It's called "stayin' alive" in the coin-operated amusement business in the '80s

Play Meter: *Are there other reasons?*
NAGA: Sure. You get together with other operators in your area on a regular basis and "chew-the-fat." Much like the stock exchange, the auction is the marketplace where changes in game prices and other industry trends are first apparent. You can come to an auction and chart prices to keep track of the value of your inventory and to recognize industry trends as they occur.

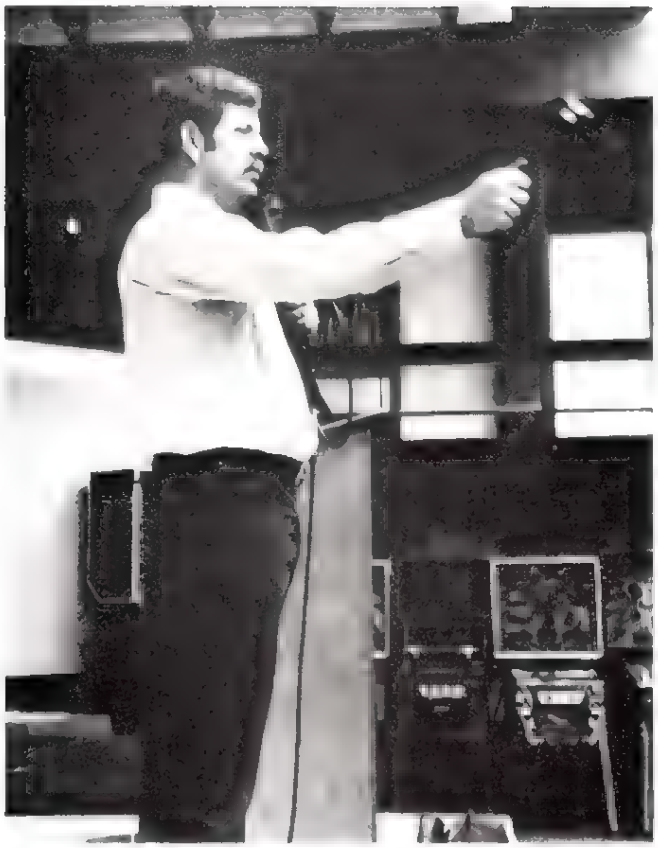
Play Meter: *Why should an operator consign games to an auction?*
NAGA: It is necessary for an operator to be able to turn existing inventory into cash and buy different games at the same time. This is called freshening up a route or arcade. There is no quicker, more effective, or convenient way than at an auction. We provide three to four auctions a year in each city so operators can plan their buying and selling throughout the year.

Play Meter: *What kind of equipment do you sell at auctions?*
NAGA: Most types of coin-operated amusement devices, including new and used video games, electromechanical and solid-state pinball games, jukeboxes, pool tables, and some novelty games.

Play Meter: *How many pieces of equipment do you usually sell at each auction?*
NAGA: Between 250-300.

Play Meter: *How do you charge a consignor for selling his games?*
NAGA: We charge a $35 entry fee per game plus a 15 percent commission based on the sales price, with a total maximum charge of $185.

Play Meter: *Why the $35 charge and what does a consignor get for it?*
NAGA: Before I started this video game auction business, I went around the country and studied other auctions. I concluded that in order to best serve both buyers and sellers, certain things were necessary. We have all our auctions at large, clean, well-lighted facilities that are well located, easy to get to, and have lots of parking. We educated an auctioneer about the video game industry,and he travels to every auction. We clean every game and hire two technicians to check out each game before it is sold. We seat the audience, and bring each game up in front of it. Each game is turned on and played while it is being auctioned. We



NAGA's auctioneer, Sam Hanblen, leads the Pittsburgh auction.

provide a full day for inspection prior to the auction. The record keeping for the entire auction is put on a computer to ensure speed and accuracy. And finally, our advertising is extensive and expensive. All of this costs money, and, consequently, it was necessary to institute the $35 charge in addition to the 15 percent commission

Play Meter: *Do you have to pay the $35 per game fee before the auction?*
NAGA: No, all fees are deducted from the monies due the consignor after the auction.

Play Meter: *How long does it take for a consignor to receive payment for his games?*
NAGA: Less than a week, including three to four days for the customary postal lag time. Our auctions are usually on Saturday, and we allow the following Monday for payment and pickup. We do our final accounting on Monday night and write and mail consignor checks on Tuesday. They are usually received by Thursday and Friday.

Play Meter: *Where do you have your auctions?*
NAGA: We try to pick cities with large populations that are centrally located and easily accessible from a three to four state area via the interstate highway system. We presently have auctions in Denver, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Memphis, Charlotte, Orlando, and Jacksonville.

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INTERSPACE VIDEO SALES

Play Meter: *Can anybody come to an auction? Does an operator need an invitation? Is there any admission price?*

NAGA: Yes, anybody in the coin-operated amusement industry is welcome at any auction, and no, you do not need an invitation to attend. There is no admission charge or advance deposit required

Play Meter: *How long does an auction take? Is food available?*

NAGA: We can sell 50 to 60 games an hour. An auction take four to five hours. However, all buyers are seated, and we always have a snack bar available with sandwiches, coffee, soft drinks, etc.

Play Meter: *How do you bid?*

NAGA: When you arrive at the auction, you register as a buyer and receive a number written on a card called a bidder paddle. You can signify your bid by raising your hand or bidder paddle, nodding your head, or any other signal you might deem appropriate

Play Meter: *Is it hard for operators to understand the auctioneer?*

NAGA: It's hard to understand every word at first, but a good auctioneer will make sure you know the dollar amount he has and the amount he wants. All else is filler

Play Meter: *What is the price range of the equipment auctioned?*

NAGA: The equipment sells at market price, as established by competitive bidding in a free marketplace. The prices are usually several hundred dollars under those established by dealers in used equipment.

Play Meter: *Is there any warranty on the games?*

NAGA: The games are being played as they are auctioned. We guarantee the game is working before it leaves the auction house. Once it leaves the auction house, we can't be responsible for it any further.

Play Meter: *How and when do you pay for the equipment purchased at an auction?*

NAGA: You can pay with cash, cashier's checks, money orders, or travelers' checks. If using cashier's checks, money orders, etc., have them in various denominations such as 5,000, 1,000, 500, and 100. We will give you change in cash, and checks you don't use you can take home and redeposit in your account. We accept no personal or company checks. You can pay for the equipment on the Saturday of the auction or the Monday following it.

Play Meter: *Can you buy and sell games at the same auction?*

NAGA: Yes, of course. This is the whole purpose of the auction. It's for the operator. He can turn old equipment into cash and freshen up a route or arcade. We provide a stable marketplace for buyers and sellers through repetitive auctions. An operator can plan his major buy and sell business decisions around the auction. •

Wurlitzer debuts video disc music box

By Gerry Wise

Wurlitzer's business approach remains conscientious, concise, but nonetheless conceptive.

At the New Orleans AMOA Expo, the West German company, although committed to the laser disc video jukebox field, remained unruffled and unhurried as others fell about themselves in the race to take the initiative away from companies establishing themselves in the tape run product line.

Wurlitzer's intentions were made known at its 24th International Distributors' Meeting held at the Grand Hotel Londra in San Remo on the Italian Riviera in early October. The Hullhorst-based company with American origin, whose name and products are acclaimed worldwide, unveiled a new belief while updating two proven products in the jukebox market.

Klaus Telgheder, Wurlitzer's general sales manager, was also realistic in his address to the delegation drawn from many countries. "During recent years we have, like prophets, waved a warning finger about neglecting the phonograph business with its peculiarities in favor of short-life, high risk gambling machines," he said. "The prophecy has become reality as too many organizations have burnt their fingers with amusement machines.

"The tendency which farsighted organizations showed years ago, namely not to put all their resources into high-risk amusement machines but also to take care of the music business, is now becoming a general movement. People are listening again when we talk about choice of music, selection of records to suit the character of the location, and quality equipment for acoustics and sound.

"The investment in the phonograph sector which has been postponed in favor of the constant replacement of amusement machines has in many countries restarted. The rapid decline in total phonograph sales which accompanied the appearance and market penetration of the new type of amusement machines has stopped.

Wurlitzer's recent efforts have not all been geared to the video disc jukebox. In San Remo it showed two new models, the [illegible] with an optional rainbow and rhythm controlled "light show," and the more modest Diana

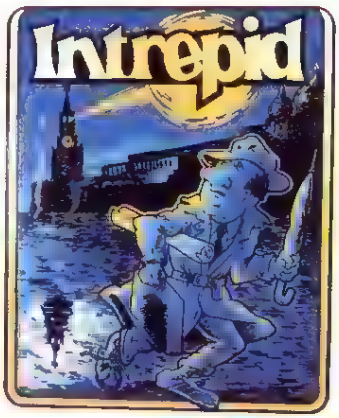
Phonograph sales up

"The phonograph sales curve is again going upward. Despite the exchange controls and import restrictions and because of balance of payment problems in many South American countries where the import of phonographs has virtually stopped, the German export statistic for phonograph exports shows for the year 1982 a 28 percent increase over 1981.

"This positive trend is continuing in 1983. There are no official U.S. figures for U.S.-made phonographs available, and it could be that this 28 percent increase is not being reflected in U.S. sales statistics. But even without official U.S. statistics, there is, without question, a strong sign of a phonograph backlog demand there. For months there has been a trend for the demand for used phonographs to be bigger than the availability, and there is also an indication that the market in gen-

Gerry Wise is assistant editor of Coin Slot International *in London, England.*

Intrepid



A game of international spies and espionage, where the object of the game is to break into the embassy's guarded vault and recover stolen secret plans. You must avoid the red guards as you search for items to help you in your mission.

Half the items you find are absolutely necessary for a successful mission. Points are awarded for each item that is picked up. Bonus points for opening the vault and completing the mission before the time runs out. Sabotage the elevator with guards trapped inside to be awarded points and to make escape easier.

Don't fall down the elevator shaft, get caught by the guards, or let the sentry at the safe see you.

If you jump off the building before you have managed to open the safe but after you have sabotaged the elevator, there is no possibility of re-entering the embassy. In this case, the bonus timer rapidly decreases to zero and you lose your agent.

After each successful mission, you are given a more difficult mission, with more efficient guards.

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Intrepid

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I.D. Card	• This will allow the spy to pass the security system and not be electrocuted.
Disguise	• Needed to get past the sentry without being detected.
Umbrella	• Allows the spy to jump off the left edge of the embassy roof without being hurt.
Wrench	• Smash elevator with wrench and trap guards at bottom of elevator shaft.
Map	• Spy does not have to look in all rooms with map.
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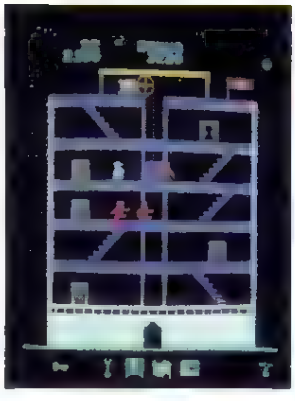

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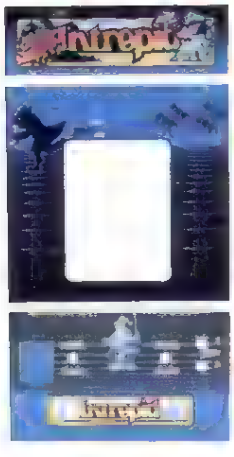

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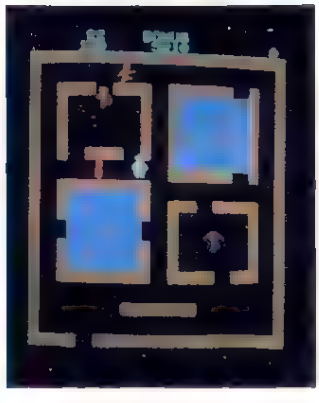

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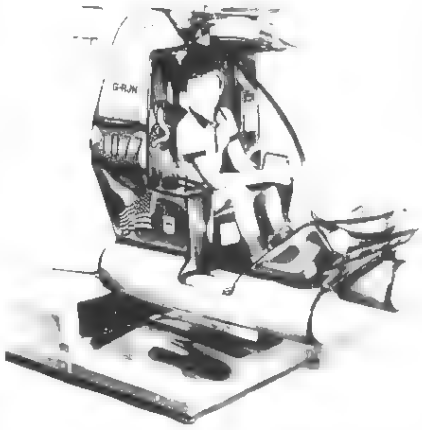

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eral for phonographs has improved."

And how is Wurlitzer reacting to these positive market indicators? Telgheder continued: "In the past during the market decline period we did not react nervously with questionable experiments, but reduced the investment in a large number of new models and set ourselves other priorities.

"But this has changed for 1984. Higher investment in the music sector has been made due to the positive changing environment. New models, to cover the whole spectrum of different sites, are being introduced.

"Coin-operated phonographs in the past simply meant to operate selective changers of audio discs. The coin-operated music business from today will still mean to operate selective changers of discs, but not necessarily limited to audio discs.

"Where there is a market for discs there is also a market for coin-operated selective disc changers, and that is Wurlitzer's speciality."

Video disc changer

It is no surprise therefore that Wurlitzer has presented the world with a video disc music box. And what does a video disc music box mean? "Videotape jukeboxes are already on the market, but we decided not to go into that because of five fundamental disadvantages of tapes opposed to discs," Telgheder said. And he listed them:

1. The access time to specific pieces on the cassette is far too long.
2. A tape cassette in itself is a little mechanism which wears out. There is no wear on video discs.
3. The quality of reproduction from tape cartridges is far less than from video discs.
4. In principle the production costs of video discs are lower
5. Producing a videotape jukebox means buying video players and a cabinet and assembling them with some electronic components. It is mainly a purchasing and assembling job, and one can expect that due to no tool investment the unit can be easily copied. It's different with a video disc player where more technology and tools are necessary. The barrier for small companies to produce a video disc changer is bigger than a videotape player.

"One could think, of course, that those disadvantages would be partially offset by one big advantage of tape, namely that it is easily possible to record on it. However, for the professional music operator this is a disadvantage rather than an advantage. The ease of recording opens the door for low quality software, recorded with low quality machines, with poor quality results, which will have a bad effect eventually on the reputation of the machine and the operator."

What, then, is needed for a video disc jukebox? First a high-quality TV monitor for reproduction, and as there are many on the market, Wurlitzer, of course, does not have to make them. Then comes a remote selection box or wallbox. Wurlitzer offers these, but various operators in varied countries might use their imagination and build their own unit.

Finally a LaserVision player, the highly sophisticated machine from Philips, is required

The unique contribution from Wurlitzer is the hideaway unit with the selective disc changer and electronic control unit which it offers in a separate cabinet, including the Philips deck and the electrical and mechanical interface components.

Conventional juke vs. video disc

Telgheder was obviously delighted with the new Wurlitzer conception, a product that will, of course, rise or fall on the availability of recorded material to suit the ever-changing demands of the music-loving public through national and standard charts. How does he see the conventional jukebox, easily able to cater to music preferences, in the future opposed to the video disc jukebox?

"It will not substitute the traditional jukebox," he said. "To the contrary. As you know, more and more people are reminded of the traditional stability of the music box business after fingers were burnt in the illusion of the easy TV game profits. The traditional music box business is growing again."

And it will grow alongside the new concept of the video disc jukebox, not because of it, he maintained. •

CRITIC'S CORNER

By Roger C. Sharpe

'Crystal Castles' may be a 'sleeper'

Competition intensifies as every manufacturer tries to find the winning formula, whether it be to show that it can produce a disc game or a conventional video. And close behind come the pinballs and a variety of novelty games—electromechanical and otherwise. If it were true before, the same holds today that almost anything goes. Add into this potpourri some conversions, and the industry has more equipment possibilities than probably at any other time

The result, unfortunately, is confusion and uneasiness because operators just don't know what to buy Some want to upgrade or replace old equipment, but what are the trade-in values and how can they maximize their investment? Should they go for a disc game? What about a disc's compatibility (and lack of it) between systems and manufacturers? And what about the follow-ups which promise easy conversion and lower prices? How about a pin or two, or some other machine that might round out a location's offerings, but there's just no room to fit anything in? And no matter what the game, can it help earnings fast enough to warrant the purchase?

The dilemma causes this writer to feel that the AMOA was less of a buying show and more of "let's see what you have, and I'll wait to see how it does before I buy" event which didn't benefit anyone, least of all the players. As the recent *Play Meter* survey showed in the November 1, 1983, issue, where do you put the 18+ million units that are already out there? This is especially critical when realizing that there is no after market anymore.

So the selection process becomes more crucial, with distributors and manufacturers having to sell models much more aggressively if they're to get any kind of run on a game. In some respects, conversions helped fill the void. But it's still a stopgap, hit-and-miss proposition that doesn't satisfy anyone

The problem stems from the fact that the industry is still trying to fight its way out of a slump,which afflicted business for more than a year, while still forging ahead into new technology. Together, these influences tend to cause a rather schizophrenic existence. No one can predict what's going to happen next It's no wonder that so much trepidation is present from manufacturers on down to operators and even players. That latter group is really in a quandary about what to expect next.

An operator can no longer get a new piece and just shove it into the available spot in a line and hope that players will discover it. There has to be advanced planning and increased sensitivity regarding positioning and the effect of a game on the nearby machines, as well as the balance of the game room or arcade These considerations and others only add to the complexity of the business as it becomes more sophisticated

As for equipment, there is a staggering array of models being tested, with a fair amount destined to get some kind of run before we see the last of them. It's almost like a revolving door at some companies as they look at a number of efforts to see how they'll test and whether there's a market for them

However, the old adage of "less being more" might hold true today, since no one needs a flood of different games, with each taking a piece out of the total pie. There needs to be some semblance of order and austerity in terms of what the market will bear and how to best tap the gaps that remain. And so a closer analysis of equipment becomes much more important for any location and operator.

Operators really have to know their audience. After all, not every game is for every type of player, and some may be better suited for a market or area than something else even if it runs counter to trends. If a majority of your players still support the older games to the extent that you're content with the earnings per

Crystal Castles *should be a steady performer, building a following of those who want a basic video game challenge with visual frills.*

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machine, then look at how another game might enhance and improve upon your profits as a complement to your entire operation. Don't risk a different type of game only because you've heard that it's doing well someplace else. It may not be for you.

Anyway, the science of picking hits, never exact or straightforward, has become even less so. Since there are no basic principles which can guarantee success, it's almost impossible to rule out any game even if on the surface it might not seem exciting. The "sleeper" factor still lurks, waiting to transform yesterday's invisible entry into tomorrow's top attraction. So stay on your toes, keep up on the news, and stay in touch with your players to get an idea of what they're looking for.

Atari's *Crystal Castles*

It would be easy to understand if this game were to get lost in the crowd. After all, the company has made a big splash with *Star Wars*, given the strength of the license, and waiting in the wings is the first disc game from Atari. However, *Crystal Castles* deserves a close look because it's an ingenious game that may prove to have a broad-based (no pun intended) audience.

PLAY: There's an enchanting little three-dimensional world to be explored with *Crystal Castles*. Players have a trak-ball and jump button (one on either side for left- or right-handed players) to use in controlling the movements of Bentley Bear as he moves around multi-level mazes in an attempt to capture ruby gemstones strewn throughout. Every gem Bentley can pick up brings point values which increase accordingly to the number of gems. There is a continuity and buildup in action.

This integration of theme and play is carried through with a design that features 10 different levels and four maze screens per level along with 16 layouts or landscape configurations. And if a player can get to the fourth wave, and beyond, there's a special screen where he goes up against Berthilda the witch.

Besides having to master the varying terrains, players are also faced with adversaries, including trees, gem eaters, little rolling crystal balls, and bees. Bentley does have a magic hat he can grab which gives him special powers for a brief period of time, but otherwise it's a matter of strategy and precise timing to survive from screen to screen

ANALYSIS: Players must maneuver around, over, and through a series of castles, fortresses, palaces, and even a dungeon to finish off all the gems in sight while avoiding everpresent enemies. What's nice about the game is that players have a storyline. You do get a sense of movement as you finish a screen and then watch Bentley move to another as it quickly takes shape on screen. For this reason alone, the play action has depth that will undoubtedly appeal to players looking for longer games and not those models which just repeat on-screen images after a limited amount of waves or screens.

Add to this the flexibility and response of using a trak-ball, and you have a machine where the environment and controls are non-threatening to even the beginning video game player or fans who have been around for a while.

GRAPHICS: *Crystal Castles* is visually arresting with stunning artwork that begins with eye-catching cabinet graphics and is followed through for each screen. The detail work is exceptional and the three-dimensional effect is further enhanced by the main object (castles, etc.) treatment—walls which become elevators, hidden tunnels, and a range of other touches. It's obvious that a great deal of effort has been expended here. The result should be savored and appreciated for what it has achieved in the area of textured raster graphics.

PROS & CONS: At a time when almost all attention has been shifted to the development and utilization of laser disc technology, *Crystal Castles* is a thorough creation. In fact, it has a personality and character that isn't going to necessarily jump out and take the world by storm. Rather, it should be a steady performer, building a following as it goes along for those who want a basic video game challenge with many of the visual frills that take *Crystal Castles* beyond the ordinary.

RATING: In the midst of great change and at a time when there's great apprehension about the future regarding equipment, *Crystal Castles*

might be a sleeper. I think that besides the exterior package, there's also a solid challenge for game players. We'll go with a ####.

Williams' *Firepower II*

It's amazing that anyone could have ever written off pinball. All there needed to be was a reevaluation of the basic principles of pin games and then a commitment to finding innovative designs that did not stray far away from what the norm needed to be. One company which seems to have discovered some answers to what a pinball machine might incorporate to generate excitement and player interest is Williams with its latest remake.

PLAYFIELD: Here's a game based, and named after, a previous Williams' sensation which, when initially released, resurrected the concept of multi-ball play after a long hiatus. Well, there are some similarities between the two versions, but also a number of enhancements and modifications which help *Firepower II* stand on its own.

The action begins with four lanes at the top (A-B-C-D) that are separated by a target, just below, and in the middle. The four thumper bumpers, in an almost squared off configuration, are back, as is the right side kick-out hole for locking up a ball. Also at the right is a wider angled area for access back to the top, while on the left is a spinner lane which can result in a high velocity shot being sent up, around, and back down to the playfield on the right side (something called an "orbit" shot).

In the middle of the board are two banks of three targets with F-I-R on the left and E-P-O on the right. Move down on the right side, and there are three more targets (W-E-R). However, for those who remember, that closely set kick-out hole on the bottom left has now been replaced with a ramp that leads up and over onto an elevated double rail. It sends any ball back down and out on the right side just behind that target bank and similar in angle to *Defender*. The bottom finishes off the layout with a conventional wire lane leading down to the flippers.

ANALYSIS: The beauty of *Firepower II* is that there exists so much continuity between the various features, as well as incredible balance in layout design from top to bottom and side to side. In fact, the embellishments are only icing to the cake which incorporate long, satisfying shot selections along with a variety of shorter range targets and areas.

Everything meshes together. The top lanes, which can be aided by a right flipper change, hold out the potential for bonus multiplier values up to 5X, while the different target banks are all tied in. If a player can complete all three banks, the flipper return lanes will light for increased values, along with the spinner and a special mystery bonus feature attached to the ramp shot, not to mention extra balls and specials. Finishing off just one bank will activate an operator-adjustable timed-feature tied into the spinner lane and the ability of the player to complete an orbit shot up and around. This will award the player with a hold-over bonus value that will be scored on the following ball as well.

Then there's the possibility of two-ball, multi-ball play by locking a ball in the kick-out hole and then hitting that top center target just below the lanes. This will result in double scoring values for as long as the two balls can be kept in play. And, when one drains, the kick-out hole is lit again for almost instantaneous multi-ball play.

The incentives are plentiful throughout, with nice, long shots from the left to right and right to left, as well as an array of reverses making almost all areas accessible at any time.

GRAPHICS: Utilizing many of the same color tones and stylizing artwork of *Defender*, *Firepower II* is an eye-catching package. Much of the credit for this appealing creation goes to the other cosmetics of light and sound effects which are richly interwoven throughout the game play resulting in a machine which is anything but static. Many kudos go to Williams for development and programming in this area.

PLAY: *Firepower II* is loaded with extra scoring values and bonus features which can provide for some high point totals. The suggestion here regarding games set on extra ball play is to keep any earned balls in memory and to try such levels as 600,000 points to start and 1,200,000 at your top limit. For free play and three-ball action, you might want to

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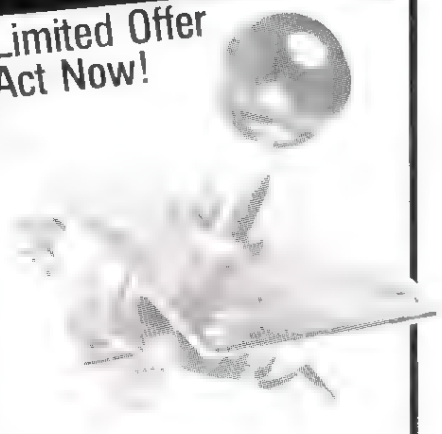

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raise these by about 200,000 points each depending, as always, on your percentaging and the caliber of your players.

PROS & CONS: Much of the detail work on *Firepower II* is evident since the playfield tends to stay alive even if a player gets on a roll. In fact, it's difficult, outside of the out-hole bonus, to max out on any area of the game. In addition, the game is rather basic when you cut away all the glitz. There's a spinner shot on the left and two shots on the right, for either the kick-out hole or access back to the top, which stand out as the primary areas. Then there are the various targets and that left side ramp which round off the action. There's something for everyone, as well as for those with diverse talent levels in playing pinball.

RATING: *Firepower II* is a solid and entertaining game, although I question the wisdom of putting it out on 50-cent play for three balls which I have encountered in New York City. In these times pricing pinball on the same level as a disc game seems to be anything but sound reasoning and good business. Maybe after pinball has gained back a substantial audience will this price be more realistic. But for now, with the equipment for the most part still in search for a following, the better approach seems to be value for the play.

Otherwise, the Ritchie family can be proud of the accomplishments of brothers Steve and Mark for bringing us both *Firepowers*. And when Williams states in its game brochure that "the legend lives on," it's right on target. But this legend, at least, hasn't gotten older; it's gotten better and maybe the lesson is that pinball today doesn't have to be austere and low-keyed to be exciting. All you need are some good playfield features, maybe a gimmick or two to add a nuance to the action, and effects which only amplify the experience. *Firepower II* has all that, and we'll go with a solid ####

Zaccaria's *Soccer Kings & Pinball Champ*

Speaking of pinball's return, Zaccaria has come back to these shores with a vengeance. At the spring AOE, it astounded many with a pair of loaded games that made one wonder if pinball ever really died. Complete with speech and a new entry design off the plunger, *Soccer Kings* and *Pinball Champ* both incorporated double level play and subtle touches which were surprisingly effective.

It appears as if all stops had been pulled out to gain an immediate impact and differentiation in equipment feel and look. And, admittedly, Zaccaria has succeeded in causing some excitement with this dynamic duo. Going beyond the cosmetics, the playfield layout has weaknesses on both machines, but there is a tendency to overlook their effect when playing the games.

The efforts are appealing and should help Zaccaria establish some foothold in the American marketplace. For an individual who has remained a purist over the years regarding pinball design and play action, I can appreciate what went into the creation of *Soccer Kings* and *Pinball Champ*. The result is a mini-review rating of solid ###s for both and a welcome back to Zaccaria at a time that couldn't be more right for some additional blood in the pinball category.

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Centuri's *Aztarac*

Conspicuous by its absence at the AMOA, which was due to the strength of the company's *Track & Field*, I remember encountering this in-house effort in Florida when it was being tested under the code name "Sylvia." The problems then, as they eventually proved to be when the game first hit the streets, were a lack of adequate effects to supplement the action on screen

On the surface, *Aztarac* wasn't too bad. There was a bubble treatment for the graphic images and a scenario of players having to protect 12 zodiac sign bases against oncoming hostile attack. The vector graphics were colorful and had a measure of dimensionality, but the play lacked cohesiveness due to the lack of information and interaction with the player. A radar scanning screen was some help in gauging the positions of enemies, but speech or other effects might have involved players even more. These points alone tended to take away much of the thunder of *Aztarac*, and I have to go with a generous ## as a result

Taito's *Elevator Action*

With an inventive storyline and on-screen action to match, Taito has kept its reputation as an innovative manufacturer that's always willing to try something different. Not that *Elevator Action* is all that different compared to any home video cartridges or even a coin-op game or two, but somehow the mix seems to work and work well

There's a single joystick and two buttons (one for shooting and the other for jumping or kicking) as players must maneuver their secret agent through a building filled not only with many rooms and floors, but also enemy agents and, of course, elevators that rise and fall. The screen layouts provide enough diversity to keep interest going as does the continuation of action from one building to the next

The lead character Otto is basically in search of secret documents, and he must advance from one place to the next to accomplish his mission As an alternative to what has recently been available in conventional video, *Elevator Action* is a welcome addition. It can probably be a steady performer. We'll go with a ###½ for a game that has its ups and downs, but doesn't seem lacking in too many areas.

In the next "Critic's Corner," I'll examine a few disc games, as well as a couple of other surprises

However, before I sign off, I want to list the games at the AMOA Show that impressed me.

The games I was most impressed by at the AMOA might be best expressed within specific categories. The most impressive piece on the floor, conventional video or disc combined, was Konami/Centuri's *Track & Field* which features realistic action and graphics, as well as an element of more physical play that had been lacking since Atari's *Football*.

Blaster from Williams looked to be a good fly and shoot game with colorful graphics and fast-paced action, although an effort like *Crossbow* from Exidy, with its exceptional graphics, could prove to be a sleeper. I liked *Pole Position II* because it improved on the original theme and added more ingredients to the package, while *Discs of Tron* should be a formidable challenger over the coming months.

In terms of disc games, I wasn't overwhelmed, having previously seen most of the efforts. *Dragon's Lair* is still appealing to me, and *M.A.C.H 3*, compared to the rest of the live action models, appeared to have an edge although I do have my reservations about this machine which I'll get into at another time. *Star Rider* from Williams, although incomplete at show time, provided enough play to get a positive response as an upcoming effort that might take players by storm

Novelty games was where the action really heated up, and it was not too difficult to recognize the appeal and staying power of such efforts as Taito's *Ice Cold Beer* and Williams' *Rat Race*.

As for pinball, Zaccaria continues to be impressive with two new entries, although *Farfalla* on an initial perusal seems to be the better balanced and more playable piece. *Firepower II* has already proven its worth in locations which are expanding product attractions. And I can't deny the personal satisfaction of seeing Game Plan back in the race with a still enjoyable and challenging *Sharpshooter II*. •

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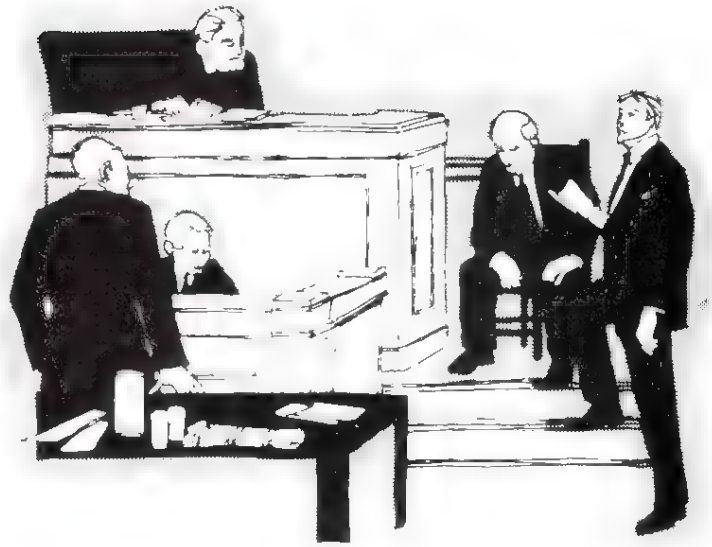

Operators should know their state's gambling laws so they do not make a substantial investment in machines which cannot be used in their state.

BEWARE OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING DEVICES

By Harold I. Gould and Laurence D. Merritt

Pinball or video games are not generally considered games of pure luck. Rather, they are games of skill.

If an operator has the slightest doubt concerning the validity of one of his machines, he should ask his local attorney to determine whether the machine is legal.

Most operators know whether gambling devices are illegal in their state. There are, however, machines offered to operators which traditionally were used for gambling, which are now advertised as legal. These "legal" machines frequently do not provide players with a cash payout.

Operators should be aware that some of these machines are still illegal although they do not give a cash winning. Possession of these machines alone can subject the operator to criminal prosecution Operators should know their state's gambling laws so they do not make a substantial investment in machines which cannot be used in their state.

Police authorities refer to the type of machines discussed in this article as "gray area" machines. Most commonly, they are slot, poker, and dice games. These machines have been constructed in such a way so as to no longer provide a cash payout.

A 1979 California case considered whether a "21" or "blackjack" game, which did not provide a cash payout, were illegal. What the machine did do was merely award free games to winning players.

The court found that this was illegal and that the owner of the machine could be subject to criminal prosecution. This decision seems somewhat hard to understand considering that many pinball and other amusement machines provide free games to successful players. Why should one machine be legal and the other illegal?

We have reviewed that California decision (which other states may follow), and we have also discussed it with various local law enforcement officials. Based on that, we have compiled three tests as indicative of when a game may be considered a gambling device. If you answer yes to any one of the following questions, the game may be a gaming device. If you answer yes to two of the questions, it very probably is a gaming device. If you answer yes to all three, there is no doubt it is a gaming device.

1. Is it a game primarily of luck? Pinball or video games are not generally considered games of pure

luck. Rather, they are games of skill. A player can develop the mechanical ability to improve his score with practice. Blackjack and slot machines are traditionally considered games of pure chance. The courts have rejected the argument that card games require a degree of skill in that strategy is used to determine whether to draw another card

2. Was the game originally designed for gambling? The original gambling purpose taints the machine although it has been altered to preclude payouts. Certainly, two friends can make side bets concerning who will get the highest score on a video game. Nonetheless, that type of equipment was not originally designed for gambling. Slot machines were originally designed for gambling although they can be altered to preclude payoffs

3. Are the machines used in such a manner so as to give some value to the player? If coupons or credit are given for food, drinks, or prizes, the machine is a gaming device. We have seen already that even the award of a free game may be sufficient to make the machine illegal.

The penalties for violating the gambling laws can be quite severe The operator faces the loss of his investment in the machines, stiff fines, jail sentences, and even the loss of the real property where the machines were stored or used

If an operator has the slightest doubt concerning the validity of one of his machines, he should ask his local attorney to determine whether the machine is legal. It would also be wise for the local attorney to discuss the matter with local law enforcement officials. •

The lau firm of Gould & Merritt is located at 1888 Century Park East, 6th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90067. Telephone: 213/552-9364. Mr. Gould has served as a Judge Pro Tem of both the Los Angeles and the Beverly Hills Municipal Courts.

Mr. Merritt has served as a Court Mediator for and on the Panel of Arbitrators of the Los Angeles Superior Court.

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OUR 'CADES

By Bill Kurtz

Game cabinets influence players

Up until about 10 years ago, arcade games' cabinets were all pretty much alike. They were all identical in shape and size, and had colored circles, colored squares, or colored stripes on them.

From the side, a player had no clue about the theme of the game. A *Wild, Wild West* pinball cabinet could just as easily have housed a *Moon Shot* pin game.

Manufacturers today are much more aware of the influence of cabinet art and design on players. In fact, some cabinets are more interesting than the games inside.

Take Bally's *Mappy*, for example. It has a fantastic cabinet, with a head that stands out above everything else in an arcade. If it weren't for the initial appeal of this novel cabinet, though, the game may have gone completely unnoticed.

Most cabinets, though, are generally alike in size. But you can take advantage of those that are different by giving some thought to where you place them in your arcade.

If you've got a *Burgertime* or *Super Pac-Man* buried in the center of a row of games, you're losing potential eye appeal. Both games have unusual cutouts in the sides of the cabinets which draw player attention.

Stick-on decals

Another consideration should be the artwork on the sides of the cabinet. If you have a lot of space between your games, those large stick-on decals can be a prime target for vandals looking to keep their fingers busy. Try to place these games closely together between other machines, so the stickers aren't easily accessible to players

Each manufacturer has its own ideas about cabinet artwork. Some of

A boring cabinet adds nothing to a game's play appeal.

Eyes are drawn to the unusual cut-out on the Burgertime *cabinet. More attention can mean more quarters. (These photographs were taken at the Fun-N Games Arcade in Cleveland, Ohio. Arcade Manager Jeff Siegel (in photo) arranged his floor plan so the cabinet can draw attention to the game.)*

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Note: Children under 18 will not be admitted until 2:00 p.m., Sunday, March 11.

DISTRIBUTORS PREVIEW

AMUSEMENT OPERATORS EXPO will feature a special distributors only exhibition preview, on Saturday, March 10 and Sunday, March 11, from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Join other distributors, like yourself for complimentary Bloody Marys or Screwdrivers on Saturday; or a complimentary Continental Breakfast on Sunday.

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SEMINAR PLANNING CHART

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Sunday March 11 3 30 5 30 p m	601 When Consider ng the Use of a Computer — What Do You Do Next? Faculty: Raymond S. Hibarger	602 nterna Cash Contro Faculty· Jon Daugherty	603 Food and Games A Good Mix or Big Mess? Faculty: J.C. Evans, Sr.	604 Purchasing Parts and Supp es Maximize Your Profits Faculty: Joe Peters	605 Bank Loans The Good The Bad and How and When to Get One Faculty: Charles C Ross	606 Laser D sc Games Operating and Servicing Techniques Faculty: Randy Fromm and panelists	607 Causes of Company Performance How to Measure and Control Success and Failure Faculty. H. Richard Priesmeyer	608 Motivating and Direct ng Employees Your Business Depends on It	

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
FRIDAY, MARCH 9
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Session 101
ADVANCED SIGNATURE ANALYSIS — PART I
Faculty: James W. Sneed, Jr., General Manager, Kurz-Kasch Inc., Electronics Division
This lecture will center around predicted signatures for games rather than taking signatures from good boards. The Signature Analyzer, NOP's and INOP's will be explained as well as demonstrated. Computer generated signature programs will be given to those who are "computer nuts." See Session 201 for Part II. There is a separate registration fee for each part. You *must* register for both sessions.

Session 102
MARKETING: DESIGNING A COMPETITIVE STRATEGY — PART I
Faculty: Roger A. Westmont, Vice President, Modern Specialty Co., Inc.
Operators today must do more than sell if they expect to grow. Your business will grow if you develop a competitive strategy using classic marketing techniques. Mr. Westmont will explain how to analyze your company's strengths and weaknesses from a marketing perspective. Subjects to be discussed include segmentation, positioning, target markets and marketing mix. We urge you to register for the second half of this seminar. See session 202. There is a separate registration fee for each part.

Session 103
PUBLIC RELATIONS: WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP THIS TROUBLED INDUSTRY
Faculty: Sandra Pesmen, Features Editor, Crain's Chicago Business, *Author,* Writing for the Media Public Relations and the Press
This course will show you how to open communication between the industry and the public, as well as between operators and suppliers. To be explored during this seminar will be techniques such as targeting your message and journalistic writing which can help stop unfair legislation and unrealistic escalating costs.

Session 104
TROUBLESHOOTING FOR THE CONVENTIONAL VIDEO GAME SYSTEM — PART I
Faculty: Robert Norton, Field Service Technician, Bally Midway Manufacturing Co.
Most video game problems are easy to diagnose and repair once you know what to look for! Typical problems such as loss of picture or sound, or a screen full of "garbage," can often be isolated and repaired on location using basic troubleshooting procedures. This two-part session is primarily geared for those with little or no knowledge of electronics — we all have to start somewhere! See session 204 for Part II. A separate registration fee is required for each part.

Session 105
CASH FLOW MANAGEMENT AND HOW IT AFFECTS THE OPERATOR
Faculty: Charles C. Ross, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
Are you unsure of your financial status from one day to the next? Wouldn't you like to know if you have enough cash on hand to make your payments each month? If you can purchase new equipment without financing? How you can effectively budget and forecast for the future? If so, this seminar will help you "balance the budget" as you learn to answer these too-often asked questions. Mr. Ross will discuss these and many other topics in the vital area of cash management including ways to improve your cash flow.

Session 106
THE DIGITAL MULTIMETER
Faculty: Randy Fromm, Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools
Successful electronic game repair does not always require the use of costly and complicated test equipment. The Digital Multimeter is a relatively inexpensive and highly portable unit that can be used to diagnose the majority of those failures commonly encountered in games.

Various types of Digital Multimeters will be introduced along with a complete and easy to understand lesson on using the meter to isolate problems, test components, locate short circuits and more.

This session is geared for those who plan on repairing games, but have little or no previous experience with electronic repair. Arcade managers will also find this session informative as it will allow them to isolate and repair many common failures without having to call for an experienced technician.

This session is a suggested prerequisite for sessions 206, 306, 406, 506, and 606.

Session 107
FUNDAMENTAL ARCADE ECONOMICS: HOW TO MEASURE LOCATION POTENTIAL AND ESTIMATE FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY
Faculty: H. Richard Priesmeyer, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This "applications-oriented" seminar provides the necessary tools and concepts needed to evaluate arcade location potential. It suggests methods of measuring market strength and provides specific direction in the problems of estimating financial performance. Complete seminar handout provided. This seminar will be repeated. See session 407.

Session 108
HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MARKET AND MANAGE YOUR AMUSEMENT BUSINESS
Faculty: Steve Gore, President, Steven Morris Co.
The amusement business has undergone drastic changes over the last 20 years. Are you in touch? Have you kept pace? If not, this session is a must! Your survival in this rapidly moving industry relies on your ability to be flexible and responsive to trends. Learn how to market your business and take advantage of the changing equipment and technology as well as the demands of your customers.

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
FRIDAY, MARCH 9
3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Session 201
ADVANCED SIGNATURE ANALYSIS — PART II
Faculty: James W. Sneed, Jr., General Manager, Kurz-Kasch Inc., Electronics Division
This lecture will center around predicted signatures for games rather than taking signatures from good boards. The Signature Analyzer, NOP's and INOP's will be explained as well as demonstrated. Computer generated signature programs will be given to those who are "computer nuts." See session 101 for Part I. There is a separate registration fee for each part. You *must* register for both sessions.

Session 202
MARKETING: IMPLEMENTING A COMPETITIVE STRATEGY — PART II
Faculty: Roger A. Westmont, Vice President, Modern Specialty Co., Inc.
Operator will not only survive but succeed if they have a marketing plan with goals and objectives. Using the strategy developed in session 102; subjects to be discussed include market entry, timing of the strategy, and advertising vs. personal selling. This is the second half of a two-part session. See session 102 for Part I. There is a separate registration fee for each part.

Session 203
NEGOTIATING COMMISSIONS WITH LOCATIONS
Faculty: Richard E. George, President, Roy George Music & Vending Corp.
Inflation affects amusement operators as much as it does anyone else, and in many cases, even more. Learn how to explain your situation to your locations in a logical and straightforward manner. Establishing weekly minimums and assessing realistic service charges will be discussed in detail. In addition, Mr. George will get heavily involved in the use of contracts in effecting the appropriate commission structure.

Session 204
TROUBLESHOOTING FOR THE CONVENTIONAL VIDEO GAME SYSTEM — PART II
Faculty: Robert Norton, Field Service Technician, Bally Midway Manufacturing Co.
Most video game problems are easy to diagnose and repair once you know what to look for! Typical problems such as loss of picture or sound, or a screen full of "garbage," can often be isolated and repaired on location using basic troubleshooting procedures. This two-part session is primarily geared for those with little or no knowledge of electronics — we all have to start somewhere! See session 104 for Part I. A separate registration fee is required for each part.

Session 205
DEPRECIATION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE AMUSEMENT OPERATOR
Faculty: Charles C. Ross, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This seminar will examine depreciation and its impact on business profitability. Comparisons of the old method of depreciation and the new accelerated cost recovery system will be shown. Depreciation misconceptions will be explored. The attendees will have an understanding of the proper method of depreciation and its true impact on profit. Learn the real impact of depreciation on your true profits not accounting profits.

Session 206
X-Y MONITORS
Faculty: Randy Fromm, Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools
The X-Y monitor can provide a video game display with greater resolution and detail than a raster scan monitor. Although there are many similarities between the two types of monitor systems, the X-Y monitor uses a different means of displaying an image on the face of the picture and is in fact easier to repair than the raster scan monitor.

This session covers the construction and operation, typical failures and troubleshooting of the X-Y monitor.

For those without previous experience in electronic repair, session 106 is a suggested prerequisite.

Session 207
CAUSES OF COMPANY PERFORMANCE: HOW TO MEASURE AND CONTROL SUCCESS AND FAILURE
Faculty: H. Richard Priesmeyer, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This seminar reports the findings of a three year study on the causes of company performance. It identifies specific management activities which are related to sales, profit, return-on-investment and other measures. Participants will gain a better understanding of how their actions can change performance. Complete seminar handout provided. This session will be repeated. See session 607.

Session 208
THE POOL TABLE — "CASH COW" OF THE COIN-OP INDUSTRY
Faculty: Charles P. Milhem, President; William Nemgar, Consultant, The Valley Co.
Pool tables, one of the industry's lowest cost investments, require very little attention and provide the coin operator with much of the funds necessary to finance the growth of his business. The financial benefits of pool table ownership, the Valley Eight Ball League Association, and other income-generating promotions will be explored.

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
SATURDAY, MARCH 10
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Session 301
TOKENS: CHANGING THE WAY AMERICA PLAYS
Faculty: David F. Kilmartin, President, Roger Williams Mint
Will tokens play a more and more important role in the coin-operated amusement industry? Will you be ready to move to tokens if your competitors introduce them first? This seminar will help you make the first jump . . . show you how to convert your operation into a token system. Mr. Kilmartin will discuss the ways in which both street location and arcade operators can increase their profits on amusement games by moving into the use of tokens. Mr. Kilmartin has a wide knowledge of successful operations that have utilized tokens, and will cover the entire area of token operations, including the proper use of record keeping.

Session 302
HOW TO COMBAT LICENSING PROBLEMS AND HANDLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT & MEDIA
Faculty: Bob Hasson, Director and General Manager, Coin Machine Sales & Service Co
This seminar will teach you how to combat local legislators when confronted with problems. Numerous actual experiences of legislative battles will be explored. Learn the importance of formulating committees and work *with* your competitors not against them, when dealing with local legislators. Learn *who* your local legislators are *before* you have to face them with a problem, thereby keeping one step ahead of them.

Session 303
ARCADE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION
Faculty: Cheryl McCown, President, Charlie's Recreation & Vending
This session will present an overview of arcade size selection, room layout for maximum profits, materials selections and installation techniques for ease of maintenance. How to avoid the pitfalls of building regulations and dealing with contractors will also be considered, as well as the operation of arcades as it pertains to room function and design

Session 304
STREET SURVIVAL
Faculty: David Solish, President, Darbin Corp.
The operator shake-out is taking its toll; and with the void this is creating, there are benefits and pitfalls the surviving operator should be aware of.

Location loans and advances, contracts, operations buy-outs, commission arrangements — these and other survival techniques will be discussed in an open, free-wheeling session on how the operator can survive this industry's version of "the day after."

Session 305
STREET LOCATION PROFIT ANALYSIS
Faculty: Charles C. Ross, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
In the face of increasing competition and rising costs, extreme care must be taken in analyzing your street locations. You will learn how to evaluate every machine and location in terms of *profit*, not revenues. Get proven formulas that will enable you to evaluate every street location, and each piece of equipment at each location. Also learn how to calculate what revenues are needed to make a profit from a new location before you invest in the equipment. You will also learn when to remove your equipment from locations that are not making a profit, and equipment rotation.

Session 306
RASTER SCAN MONITORS
Faculty: Randy Fromm, Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools
Even the most sophisticated video game won't make a cent when the monitor fails. Fortunately, the video monitors used in today's games are easy to troubleshoot and repair.

This session covers the type of monitor most commonly found in video games, the raster scan monitor. Topics covered will include monitor construction and operation, typical failures, troubleshooting and repair. Safety considerations will also be discussed.

General monitor operation will be presented along with a more detailed look at the two types of monitors found most often in contemporary video games.

This session is geared for those with some background in electronics, or those who have attended sessions 106 and 206.

Session 307
EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT: HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS AND PLAN FOR FUTURE GROWTH
Faculty: H. Richard Priesmeyer, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This popular seminar allows you to evaluate your business as a management consultant would. Using a carefully designed checklist, you can recognize specific strengths and weaknesses in your business. Attention is then given to identifying opportunities which provide for company growth while at the same time reducing business risks. Complete seminar handout provided. This session will be repeated as session 507.

HAVE YOUR VISA/MASTERCARD READY ... CALL TOLL-FREE 800 243 3238 TO REGISTER

Session 308
BUSINESS FORMS AND RECORD KEEPING FOR THE ARCADE AND OPERATOR
Faculty: Stephen Goot, President, Total Vending Services, Inc.
In any organization internal work flow is the key to success. Accurate record keeping of all the important documents and actions is absolutely necessary. Learn how to organize routes to enhance record keeping abilities. Learn what information you need and what you don't need. Efficient use of forms and records will be demonstrated along with tips on using and evaluating the process of information gathering. Proper record keeping for a token-oriented arcade will also be discussed.

Session 309
JUKEBOXES: POTENTIAL PROFIT CENTER
Faculty: To be announced
It's long been acknowledged the jukebox is "the backbone of the industry." In this seminar, operation techniques and advantages of the jukebox are discussed. Jukebox programming, location requests, maintaining a record library, and bookkeeping procedures can be mind-boggling unless you know the tricks of the trade.

This session is for experienced as well as novice jukebox operators who are looking to get the maximum out of this dependable coin-op amusement type.

VISIT THE SPECTACULAR EXHIBIT HALL — ALL IMPORTANT SUPPLIERS WILL BE THERE

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
SATURDAY, MARCH 10
3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Session 401
LOCATION RELATIONS
Faculty: Gene Winstead, Owner, Gene's Machines and Beanie's Arcade
This seminar will teach you how to maintain favorable relations with the individual personalities at your locations, while maintaining profitability within the location. Do's and don'ts of interacting with the individual personalities of customers will be explored as well as how to operate accounts and preserve positive relationships.

Session 402
LOCATION CONTRACTS
Faculty: Richard E. George, President, Roy George Music & Vending Corp.
With the advent of "high tech" equipment, and the accompanying costs, there has never been a greater need for the completion of sound, lega operating contracts with locations. This seminar will deal with the preparation, submission and execution of various types of location agreements. Recognizing that contract law varies from state to state, the speaker will provide sample location agreements that can be tailored to an individual operator's particular needs in his operating area. Specific topics to be discussed are terms of the agreement; commission rates, coupled with minimum weekly guarantees and/or service charges; calculation of damages in the event of a breach, successor clauses and appendixes.

AFTER READING THE SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS CAREFULLY, TURN TO PAGE A15 TO REGISTER

Session 403
COMPUTER ROUTE ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS — ARE THEY FOR YOU?
Faculty: Raymond S. Hibarger, President, Hanson Distributing Co.
A comprehensive outline of a computerized route accounting system will be presented. Topics covered will include:

- functional aspects of route operation as cash accountability
- machine revenue reporting
- cost allocation
- vehicle maintenance
- statutory reporting
- license and contract tracking
- service logs

Session 404
DON'T MAKE THE IRS RICH: WHAT THE AMUSEMENT OPERATOR MUST KNOW TO $AVE TAXE$
Faculty: Irving L. Blackman, Vice President, Blackman, Kallick & Co.
One of the objectives of the independent businessman should be to retain the maximum after-tax income possible under the law. This seminar will explain to the operator in layman's terms how you can take advantage of such sophisticated tax planning techniques as:

- how to transfer your business to the next generation . . . tax free
- learn how to deduct your childrens' college education, legally
- how to take money out of your corporation
- you already own the best tax shelter in the country — your business; find out how to turn on the tax savings

. . . and many, many more — this session is vital to all independent operators.

Session 405
RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS FOR AMUSEMENT OPERATORS
Faculty: Charles C. Ross, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
Are you getting adequate return on your investment? You will learn to calculate return on investment for the firm, each location, and each piece of equipment. Learn when to rotate equipment, when to discard equipment and when to add more equipment to good locations.

Session 406
THE POWER SUPPLY
Faculty: Randy Fromm, Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools
As the name implies, the power supply in a video game or electronic pinball machine provides the current to operate the various electronic circuits in the game.

Since power supply failures are quite common in electronic games and it's not at all unusual for a single game to have several individual supplies, a good working knowledge of power supplies is essential.

This session covers the construction, operation, typical failures and troubleshooting of the power supplies used in electronic games. This session is geared for those with some experience in electronic repair; or for those who attended sessions 106, 206 and 306.

HAVE YOUR VISA/MASTERCARD READY ... CALL TOLL-FREE 800 243 3238 TO REGISTER

Session 407
FUNDAMENTAL ARCADE ECONOMICS: HOW TO MEASURE LOCATION POTENTIAL AND ESTIMATE FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY
Faculty: H. Richard Priesmeyer, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This "applications-oriented" seminar provides the necessary tools and concepts needed to evaluate arcade location potential. It suggests methods of measuring market strength and provides specific direction in the problems of estimating financial performance. Complete seminar handout provided. This is a repeat of session 107.

Session 408
HOW TO SOLICIT TOP LOCATIONS
Faculty: Stephen Goot, President, Total Vending Services, Inc.
Top locations mean top dollars! Finding, getting and keeping the best locations possible, however is another story. This session will show you how to compete successfully to secure the best sites. Learn how to give a professional presentation. Discover ways to control the location to receive profitable return on your investment. And, most importantly, acquire techniques which will ensure the best locations remain yours!

Session 409
VENDING: CAN IT WORK FOR YOU?
Faculty: To be announced
Vending and coin-op amusements have only one thing in common — the coin slot. But for the enterprising operator who is looking to diversify into the operations of more stable equipment types, there are some coin-op amusement principles that apply and others that don't. This session, geared for the coin-op amusement operator who is a vending novice, is a good introduction to the world of vending

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
SUNDAY, MARCH 11
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Session 501
PROMOTE! PROMOTE! PROMOTE!
Faculty: Arthur Noparstak, Director of Marketing, WICO Corporation
In times of increased competition and in order to increase traffic you must promote your amusement business. This session will present many promotion ideas designed for street and arcade locations. If you're interested in increased business opportunities — PROMOTE! Attend this important seminar!

Session 502
ARCADE GAME MIX AND TRAFFIC FLOW
Faculty: Jon Daugherty, President, United Artists Theater & Amusements, Inc. and panelists
The industry has changed in a very short time, and with it, new merchandising methods have been replaced by even newer ones. This session will deal with the overall strategies and trends of equipment for locations, types of equipment, pricing, factors leading to purchasing and selling games (analyzing your net costs of new games). The difference between games, i.e. pinball vs. video vs. skeeball, and their impact on arcade traffic flow will also be explored

Session 503
MAINTAINING AND MANAGING THE ARCADE — WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
Faculty: Cheryl McCown, President, Charlie's Recreation & Vending
This seminar is designed for the existing arcade operator who is trying to maintain profitability in a rapidly changing and competitive business environment. Subjects to be discussed are "token wars" and the point of diminishing returns; the critical importance of cash and token controls; some promotional ideas that work; equipment strategy at a time when there is no "used" marketplace.

Session 504
USED GAME ALTERNATIVES: IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?
Faculty: William Nemgar, Owner, Salmon River Amusement
The used game . . . is there a market for it? What are the alternatives for disposing of used games . . . trade ins? Home sales? Perhaps auctions or rentals? Come find out the pros and cons of each method, and learn which is most viable for your operation.

VISIT THE SPECTACULAR EXHIBIT HALL — ALL IMPORTANT SUPPLIERS WILL BE THERE

Session 505
ARCADE PROFIT ANALYSIS
Faculty: Charles C. Ross, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
Learn how to determine if an arcade should be kept open or closed. Learn the feasibility of opening a new arcade. Learn how to determine if each piece of equipment is generating a profit or a loss in your arcade. Get proven formulas for determining profits for equipment and the entire arcade

Session 506
SEMICONDUCTORS
Faculty: Randy Fromm, Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools
The electronic circuits in today's video games and electronic pinball machines are based primarily on the use of semiconductors. If you have an electronics failure in a game, chances are quite good that one or more semiconductors has failed.

Semiconductors are components such as diodes and transistors. They're easy to understand and easy to test to see if they're working properly or not. All of the different types of semiconductors commonly encountered in games will be discussed along with their operation, testing specifications and easy ways to obtain working substitutions when an exact replacement is not readily available.

This session is geared for those with some experience in electronic repair. Sessions 106, 206, 306 and 406 are suggested prerequisites.

Session 507
EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT: HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS AND PLAN FOR FUTURE GROWTH
Faculty: H. Richard Priesmeyer, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This popular seminar allows you to evaluate your business as a management consultant would. Using a carefully designed checklist, you can recognize specific strengths and weaknesses in your business. Attention is then given to identifying opportunities which provide for company growth while at the same time reducing business risks. Complete seminar handout provided. This is a repeat of sesson 307

Session 508
NEW EQUIPMENT PURCHASING IN TODAY'S MARKET
Faculty: To be announced
Faced with the stark realities of rising costs, the owner/operator must become familiar with the various factors leading to a wise buying decision. This session will deliver a better understanding of these factors; selectivity, reliability, and supplier analysis.

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS
SUNDAY, MARCH 11
3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Session 601
WHEN CONSIDERING THE USE OF A COMPUTER — WHAT DO YOU DO NEXT?
Faculty: Raymond S. Hibarger, President, Hanson Distributing Co.
If you are considering the use of your own in-house computer, or if this kind of consideration is in the not too distant future, then this session will be of value to you. Topics will include:
- vendor selection
- software and hardware service contracts
- software portability
- hardware expandability
- custom programming
- user training and payback analysis

Session 602
INTERNAL CASH CONTROL
Faculty: Jon Daugherty, President, United Artists Theater & Amusements, Inc
How can the operator guard against cash loss? This session will deal with the various ways to alleviate these problems in the industry. Also explored will be the use of the polygraph, coin-count metering system, and collection procedures.

Session 603
FOOD AND GAMES: A GOOD MIX OR BIG MESS?
Faculty: J.C. Evans, Sr., Vice President, Gold Medal Products Co.
As a part of the growing Amusement/Recreation/Leisure-Time Industry, today's "Family Fun Center" operator must evaluate FunFood profit strategies as a traffic-builder, profit-maker or "too much bother." Attend this seminar, and find out what the pros and cons are of each of your options

Session 604
PURCHASING PARTS AND SUPPLIES: MAXIMIZE YOUR PROFITS
Faculty: Joe Peters, President, Wildcat Chemical Co., and Big State Supply Co.
Purchasing parts and supplies . . . it sounds so simple. Not really. Like everything in business, it requires a carefully planned professional approach. Doing it the right way can make a big difference in your profit picture. From exploring basics like when and where to buy, to tackling more complex problems like purchasing for multiple locations with a variety of equipment, this seminar is designed to provide valuable, how-to information.

Session 605
BANK LOANS: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND HOW AND WHEN TO GET ONE
Faculty: Charles C. Ross, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This seminar is designed to help your banker understand your business. Learn what industry information to tell your banker, and what *not* to tell him. Learn what to tell him about your business, and yourself. The use of the 3C's of credit, and how to present your financial plan to increase your chances of receiving a bank loan will also be discussed. Find out how much money to borrow. Learn *if* you should get a bank loan and how to improve your chances of repayment.

Session 606
LASER DISC GAMES — OPERATING AND SERVICING TECHNIQUES
Faculty: Randy Fromm, Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools and panelists
Laser disc video games are reporting phenomenal earnings records, but if the game is down, that doesn't put quarters in the cash box. Laser disc technology is fraught with its own special service challenges for today's servicepeople. Technical instructor, Randy Fromm will lead a panel of industry experts on the operation and servicing of contemporary laser disc video game systems. Operation and maintenance procedures will be discussed. This session is geared for those with little knowledge of electronics. Suggested prerequisites: sessions 106, 206, 306, 406 and 506.

Session 607
CAUSES OF COMPANY PERFORMANCE: HOW TO MEASURE AND CONTROL SUCCESS AND FAILURE
Faculty: H. Richard Priesmeyer, Partner, Innovative Management Consultants
This seminar reports the findings of a three year study on the causes of company performance. It identifies specific management activities which are related to sales, profit, return-on-investment and other measures. Participants will gain a better understanding of how their actions can change performance. Complete seminar handout provided. This is a repeat of session 207.

Session 608
MOTIVATING AND DIRECTING EMPLOYEES: YOUR BUSINESS DEPENDS ON IT!
Faculty: To Be Announced
How do your employees handle the customers who come into your amusement center? Your profit margin is linked directly to your customer relations and service. Can you train your employees so that profits can increase? This session will highlight proven and successful means to both increase profits and customer satisfaction. Learn to correct and improve the performance of your employees; attend this session.

SEE REGISTRATION FORM ON PAGE A15

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

Amusement Operators Expo '84 March 9-11, 1984

Rooms at the special rates shown below have been set aside at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Holiday Inn O'Hare/Kennedy and the Westin Hotel, O'Hare for those attending AOE '84. To obtain these preferred room rates, you must use this form (or a photocopy of this form) Phone requests not accepted

Hotels are subject to availability, so please make your reservation request as early as possible. Rooms will be assigned based on availability at time of request.

To: Housing Bureau
Rosemont Conv. Bureau
9291 W. Bryn Mawr
Rosemont, IL 60018

MARCH 9-11, 1984
O HARE EXPO CENTER
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Please make reservations for _____ persons

Name(s) _____ Room Type

Room Type

Room Type

Company Name

Address

City State Zip

Arrive ___ Date ___ at ___ a.m. p.m.

Departure Date

CHECK IN TIME IS 3:00 P.M. AND CHECK OUT TIME IS 12:00 NOON ALL RATES SUBJECT TO APPLICABLE TAXES.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD HOTEL CHOICE. ALSO CIRCLE ACCOMMODATIONS DESIRED.

HEADQUARTERS HYATT REGENCY		Choice ☐
Singles:	$79	
Doubles:	$94	
Twins:	$94	

HOLIDAY INN		Choice ☐
Singles	$65	
Doubles	$75	

WESTIN O'HARE		Choice ☐
Singles:	$75	
Doubles:	$75	

Reservations must be received no later than February 8, 1984

RESERVATIONS ARE HELD TILL **6 P.M.** YOU MAY **GUARANTEE** YOUR RESERVATIONS BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

(A) **ASSURED RESERVATIONS** — USE YOUR AMERICAN EXPRESS, CARTE BLANCHE OR DINERS CLUB TO GUARANTEE YOUR RESERVATION.

(B) **ADVANCE DEPOSIT** FOR THE FIRST NIGHT TO BE ENCLOSED WHEN MAILING YOUR RESERVATION.

(C) **COMPANY GUARANTEED RESERVATION**

VISA **CARTE BLANCHE** **DINERS CLUB**
(PLEASE CIRCLE)

CREDIT CARD # _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____

AIRLINE RESERVATIONS

WE CAN SAVE YOU UP TO 40% ON YOUR AIRFARE!

ROBUSTELLI WORLD TRAVEL in conjunction with **AMERICAN AIRLINES** has contracted the *LOWEST* possible rates for the **AMUSEMENT OPERATORS EXPO attendees.**

Call your *Robustelli World Travel Specialists* at 800-242-4321 for reservation confirmation and tickets. Tell the answering agent that you're bound for the AMUSEMENT OPERATORS EXPO in Chicago.

In Connecticut call collect 847-6270.

ROBUSTELLI WORLD TRAVEL has two gifts for you:

1. *Executive Luggage Tags* — Just send us four of your business cards and we will enclose two laminated executive luggage tags with your tickets.
2. A certificate good for one free beverage of your choice, coming and going, with each round trip ticket on AMERICAN AIRLINES

ROBUSTELLI WORLD TRAVEL

American Airlines

THE INDUSTRY EVENT — BIGGER & BETTER THAN EVER

Tour booths filled with the latest games, accessories, equipment, services and supplies available in the amusement industry.

Test the equipment. View hands-on demonstrations. See more new product introductions at AOE than at any other show. And AOE gets your questions answered. Hundreds of manufacturers, suppliers and distributors will be here answering *your* problems and concerns. View the equipment that will help you survive in 1984 and beyond!

Following are just some of the leading amusement industry companies being represented at AOE '84:

VISIT THE SPECTACULAR EXHIBIT HALL — ALL IMPORTANT SUPPLIERS WILL BE THERE

ABC Warehouse-Happy Sign Division
Amusement Emporium, Inc.
A-1 Ash Tray Company
Acme Premium Supply Corporation
Air-Vend, Inc.
Alway Electronic Components
Alter Enterprises, Inc.
Americade Amusements, Inc.
American Lock Company
Amusement Technology, Inc.
Arachnid, Inc.
Ardac, Inc.
Automated Production Equipment Corporation
Auto Rovo/Canada Ltd.
Bhuzac International, Inc.
The Bio-Scope Company
Bob's Space Racers, Inc.
Brandt, Inc.
Business Builders Promo & Marketing Services
Canadian Coin Box Magazine
Carousel International Corporation
Chicago Lock Company
Cinematronics, Inc.
Compunetic Devices
Coin Acceptors, Inc.
Coin Controls, Inc.
Coin Mechanisms, Inc.
Convertible Video Systems Ltd.
Creative Engineering, Inc.
D & R Industries
Destron, Inc.
Digimed
Digital Controls, Inc.
Don Taylor Sales
Dynamo Corporation
Eastern Micro Electronics
Electro-Sport, Inc.
Enter-Tech
Exidy, Inc.
The Game Exchange, Inc.
Game Connection International
Gametecniks Division
Game Technology
Gold Medal Products Company
Mylstar Electronics, Inc.
Green Duck Corporation
Greyhound Electronics, Inc.
Hoffman International
House of Cards, Inc.
IDA, Inc.
Innovative Concepts in Entertainment
Innovative Industries, Inc.
Intrepid Marketing, Inc.
Imperial International
Kiddie Rides USA
Konami, Inc.
Kurz-Kasch Electronics
Lowen-America, Inc.
M. Kramer Manufacturing Company
Marantz Piano Company, Inc.
Meltec, Inc.
Merit Industries, Inc.
Miracle Recreation Equipment Company
Movie Hut, Inc./Wright Group
National Ticket Company
Nicole Manufacturing
Nintendo of America
Nomac Ltd.
The Norton Company, Inc.
North American Amusement
Northeast Venture Group, Inc.
Omaco Enterprises, Inc.
Penn-Ray Sutra Corporation
Products International
Publishers for Conventions, Inc.
R.J. Newborough & Company, Inc.
The Robot Factory
Roger Williams Mint
Ron Care Corporation
Rowe International
Sally Industries, Inc.
Scan Coin, Inc.
Show Games
Skee-Ball, Inc.
SNK Electronics Corporation
Standard Change-Makers, Inc.
Status Game Corporation
Super Ball, Inc.
Tech Vend Marketing
Tommy Lift Gate Manufacturing Company
TSK Electronics Corporation
The Valley Company
Van Brook of Lexington, Inc.
Vending International Corporation
Venture Line, Inc.
Video Music International, Inc.
Wildcat Chemical Company
Wico Corporation
Williams Electronics, Inc.
World Wide Press, Inc.
Zampera, Inc.
Zany Animated Productions

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

You'll save money by registering now. Since attendance in many sessions is limited, it is strongly advised that you register early to ensure your admittance into the sessions of your choice. To register, use the Seminar Registration Form on the opposite page. Please use a separate form for each registrant. You may photocopy the blank form for additional registrants.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION
Available through February 17, 1984
$25.00 for each seminar. To qualify for this rate, your registration form with full payment must be postmarked by February 17, 1984.

REGULAR REGISTRATION
After February 17, 1984
$35.00 for each seminar.

SPECIAL 6 SESSION BONUS PACKAGE — SAVE $80!
Available until February 17, 1984. When you register with full payment (postmarked by February 17, 1984) for 6 sessions (one in each time frame), you will receive them at a savings of $80 — at the low price of $130!

VISA AND MASTERCARD
You have the option of charging your registration fees to your Visa or MasterCard account. Simply complete the appropriate section on the opposite page, or use our toll free number (800) 243-3238 to call in your registration between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. EST Monday — Friday by February 17. ($50 minimum order) For general information, and CT residents, please call (203) 852-0500.

CONFIRMATION
All registrations postmarked by February 17, 1984 will be acknowledged by mail. All tickets can be picked up in the Seminar Registration area of the O'Hare Expo Center beginning at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, March 9, and starting at 8:00 a.m on Saturday, March 10 and Sunday, March 11.

EXHIBITION ADMITTANCE
Registrants for seminars will *automatically* receive Exhibition admission badges with their seminar ticket. Those not registered for seminars can pick up Exhibition passes at the door, or save time at the show by filling in the quantity you require on the opposite page. Exhibition passes may be ordered until February 24, 1984 and are available for the coin-op trade only.

SEMINAR TIMES AND LOCATIONS
Seminars will take place from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. and 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. each day. All seminars will be held in the O'Hare Expo Center/Hyatt Regency O'Hare. Information on specific seminar meeting rooms will be available at the Center's Registration Area.

CANCELLATIONS
Cancellations, with full seminar refund will be accepted if received in writing and postmarked by February 27, 1984. No refunds will be given for cancellations received after February 27.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS
A preferred block of sleeping rooms has been set aside at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare for AOE '84 attendees. To be assured of a room at the Hotel, we urge you to make your reservations early. See the Hotel Reservation Form on page 12 of this brochure.

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS
Be sure to use a separate form for each registrant. Photocopy the blank form.

1. Fill in your name, title, company, address, and telephone number (including the area code.)

2. Check the appropriate boxes. This information is required. Open to the trade only.

3. Indicate the quantity of additional Exhibition passes you require.

4. Circle the seminars you plan to attend. Circle one session in each time period. The session numbers correspond to the session titles listed in this brochure.

5. Fill in the quantity and dollar amounts of sessions purchased or check Special 6 Session Bonus Package if you qualify.

6. Add up the dollar amounts and enclose the total payment due.

7. Make checks payable (in U.S. Dollars drawn on a U.S. Bank) to Conference Management Corporation. Mail the completed Registration Form with your remittance to: Conference Management Corporation, Registration Dept., AOE '84, 17 Washington Street, Norwalk, CT 06854.

8. If you are charging your registration fees to Visa or MasterCard, please complete this section of the Registration Form. To speed up your registration, call 800-243-3238 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. EST, Monday — Friday by February 17. ($50 minimum order) For general information, and CT residents, please call (203) 852-0500.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE ONE OF YOUR ASSOCIATES TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS BROCHURE, PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW AND SEND TO:

Conference Management Corporation
17 Washington Street
P.O. Box 4990
Norwalk, CT 06856

Please send a copy of the AMUSEMENT OPERATORS EXPO brochure to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

SEMINAR REGISTRATION FORM

Please photocopy this form for additional registrants. Only one person per form.
To register, please circle the seminars you plan to attend.
Seminars are grouped by the day and time each is offered.
Registration fees and complete registration information appear on the opposite page.

AOE '84

March 9-11, 1984
O'Hare Expo Center
Hyatt Regency O'Hare
Chicago, Illinois

Name	
Title	
Company	
Street Address	
City	STATE ZIP
Phone Number	AREA CODE NUMBER

Please check only one in each category.

I am currently involved in:

- ☐ Distributor sales
- ☐ Arcade ownership
- ☐ Technician
- ☐ Route owner operator
- ☐ Distributor management
- ☐ Arcade management
- ☐ Design & development
- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

I have been in the amusement industry:

- ☐ Under 1 year
- ☐ 1-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ Over 10 years

The number of machines I operate are:

- ☐ Less than 30
- ☐ 31-75
- ☐ 76-150
- ☐ 151-300
- ☐ Over 300

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEMINAR/WORKSHOPS

Friday, Saturday and Sunday
March 9, 10, and 11
Morning sessions: 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
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EXHIBITION

March 9, 10, and 11
Hours: Friday and Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Special Distributors' Preview hours:
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March 10 and 11
9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

NOTE: Children under 18 will not be admitted until 2:00 p.m., Sunday, March 11.

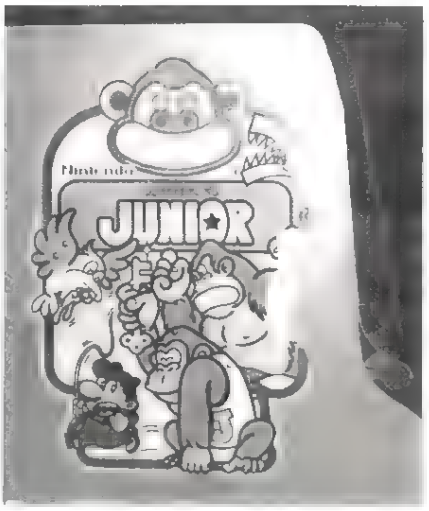
Bally's games (*Pac-Man* and *Ms. Pac-Man*) have designs painted on the cabinet sides,while others (*Tron* and *Journey*) use decals. Nintendo seems to lean toward stickers, while Williams prefers painted designs

The sides of convertible games must, of course, be blank to allow frequent game changes. Such games are best placed in the center of a bank of machines

For locations with many young players, Sega Electronics introduced "Character Cabinets" last spring. The cabinets, which average 58 inches high, 31 inches wide, and 24 inches deep, are being sold with a choice of one of several Sega video games included

"Designed for the shorter stature of children, the amusing Monster, Space Monkey, and Robot cabinets bring the game screen and controls down to a child's level, enabling children to play the games more easily

"Ideal for family restaurant arcade locations, the brightly colored and durable cabinets can stand out in any location, heightening interest and play appeal of any game," according to Sega



Stick on decals are a prime target for vandals.

Customizing cabinets

Williams Electronics should also be commended on the "drain pipe" cabinet available for its *Bubbles* video. Customizing game cabinets to match the game theme is an idea which should be explored further.

Because so much of a pinball machine is devoted to artwork, the conventional wisdom is that no matter how good the playfield is, if the game has lousy artwork, it won't have initial appeal to players and will be doomed. The artwork takes in the first quarter, but it's the game play that brings in additional coins. The same type of thinking applies to videos

An unusual cabinet will not rescue a poor game; if that was the case, *Mappy* would have been the top earning game of the year. What an unusual cabinet will do is attract players' attention, hopefully getting them to drop in that first quarter to find out if the game is as interesting as the cabinet it's housed in

Consider the cabinet; while it's what's inside that counts, the appeal of the total video package is important when arranging your games. •

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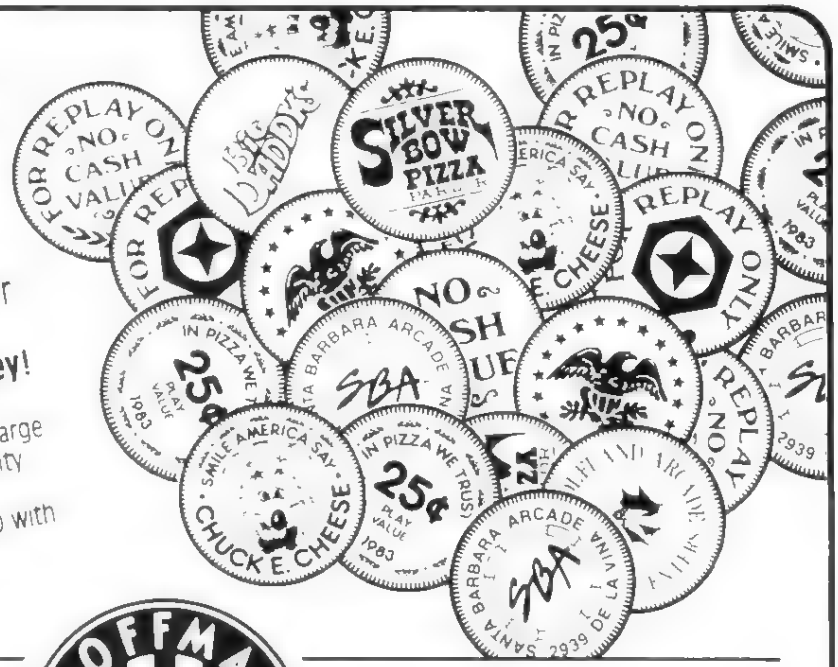

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FRANK'S CRANKS

By Frank "The Crank" Seninsky

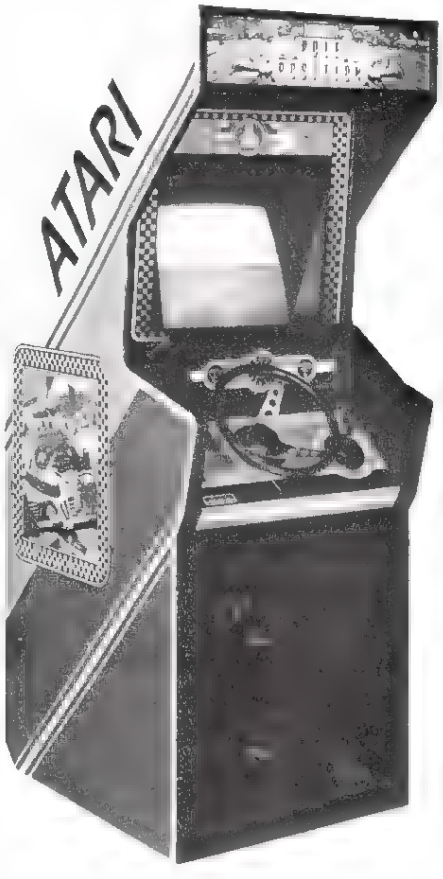
Shape up your route

For these past few weeks following the AMOA Show, my company, Alpha-Omega Amusements & Sales, has been updating "dog" games with the latest conversion kits and moving a lot of equipment. We purchased a few *M.A.C.H. 3s*, a couple of *Ice Cold Beer* games, a *Track & Field*, *Star Wars*, and *Crystal Castles* on closeout.

We heavily bought the following kits: *Pole Position II*, which is doing great on 50-cent play: *Donkey Kong 3*; *Time Pilot*; *Elevator Action*, which made winners out of my 20 *Jungle Hunts* and *Jungle Kings*; *Mr. Do!'s Castle*; and *Mega Zone*. I am waiting eagerly for *Junior Pac Man* kits, which I hope will bring new life to my 50 *Pac-Mans*. We also kept our *Ms. Pac-Man* because the sale price is too low. If *Junior Pac-Man* is a good game, then I feel the value of *Pac-Man* and *Ms. Pac-Man* will slightly increase.

I've talked to many old-time operators and they aren't complaining. Bottom line profit is actually better now than last year for most of these operators. Sure their gross collections are off 20-30 percent, but they have cut their game purchases by 70 percent or more. Locations aren't making ridiculous demands for new equipment, which usually force operators to overbuy. I believe that the smart operator will do well if he works hard and utilizes present equipment.

Service Tips



Games for Conversion—To save time on conversions, it is a good idea to decide beforehand what old game you are going to convert. For example, if you are installing a *Roc 'n Rope*, *Time Pilot*, or *Mega Zone* kit, note that these boards will *plug right into* any of the games developed by Konami: *Super Cobra*, *Scramble*, *Turtles*, *Amidar*, *Tut*, *Pooyan*, *Locomotion*, *Frogger*, and *Gyruss* (for next year maybe). If you know some easy games to convert to other games, drop me a line. We'd all like to know.

Pole Position—An operator wants to know why on some *Pole Positions* the speed went as high as 240 mph and on others it would only go in the 190 mph range. The answer lies in the difficulty settings. The speed is increased as you make the game more difficult.

While we are on this game, there is a 20 amp slo-blo fuse, located on the bottom of the cabinet on the power supply, that frequently fails. When this fuse goes, you will get a white or blue screen. I suggest increasing the fuse to a 25 amp slo-blo and *replacing* the fuse holder. Most of the fuse holders are loose and do not have enough spring tension to hold the fuse tightly. Atari used a cheap fuse holder.

Gross collections are off 20-30 percent, but operators have cut game purchases by 70 percent or more. I believe that the smart operator will do well if he works hard and utilizes present equipment.

M.A.C.H. 3—This game can have erratic coin counting. Sometimes the coins will not be counted and other times, after counting a number of coins, credits will be subtracted. The game will go into "restart" after coins are put in. Frequently you will find a bad diode in the coin meter. Cut the red wire going into the coin meter. If your problem disappears, it's in the meter. If your problem continues, call Mylstar for a modification kit. This tip was contributed by Craig Cochran, technical manager, Showbiz Pizza Place, Dearborn, Michigan.

Dragon's Lair—"Dear Frank, Attached is a problem and solution concerning *Dragon's Lair*. I really appreciate and enjoy your service tips. If more techs would take a little time and share with each other, it would sure make life easier on all of us. Keep cranking. Rod Towns, 7-Eleven Food Stores, Hendersonville, Tennessee."

Symptoms: Players complain they make the correct move but Dirk dies. The most common complaint is that he would not move to the left.

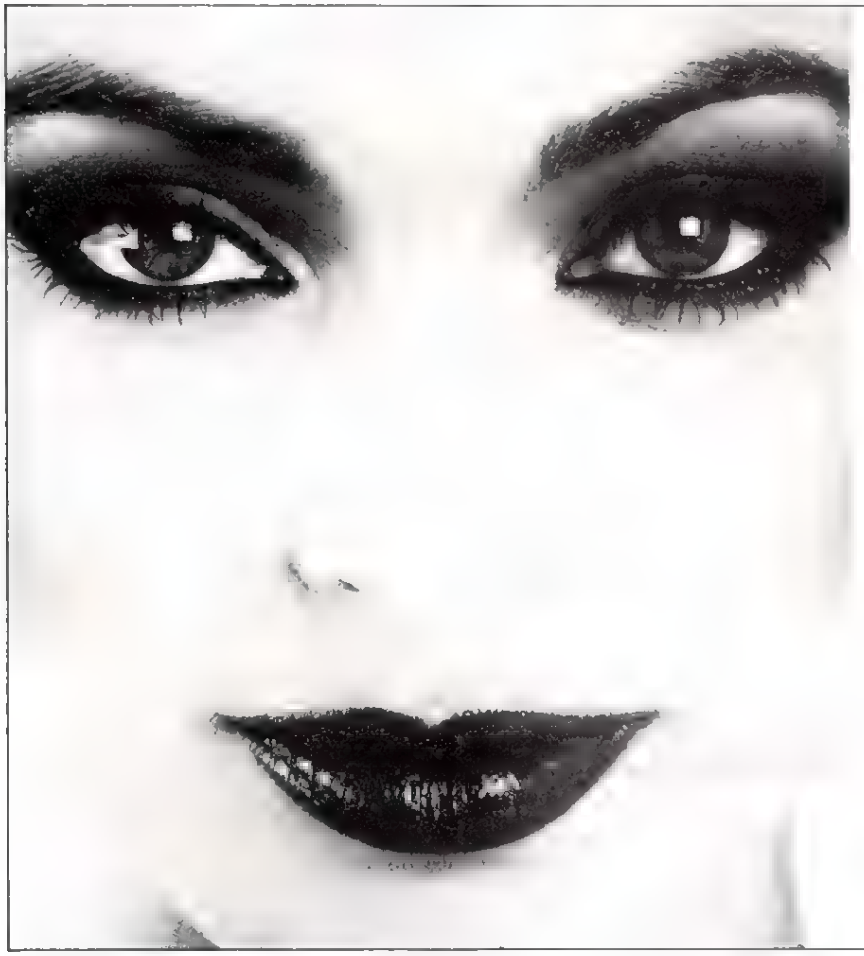
The Test: Using an Ohm meter,

place one lead on the grounding tab of the player panel. With the other lead, probe the grounding wire, starting at the player #1 or player #2 switch connection. Follow the wire around the panel to the "left move" switch connection, testing as you go along. A rising resistance indicates the cause of the problem. Note that the switch for a left move is the last switch in the circuit and shows the most resistance to ground.

If the resistance does not rise, leave one lead on the grounding tab and place the other on the left move switch connection. Jiggle the player panel and observe the meter for intermittent continuity or lack of continuity.

Solution: Clean all the switch terminals and solder the ground wire directly to the tabs. This is almost always where you'll find poor connections.

In addition, you may want to put a microswitch-type heavy duty joystick on your game, such as one made by Suzo (like on *Q*bert*). I have done this on all our *Dragon's Lair* games and have not encountered any more joystick problems. The leaf switches seem to build up a slight resistance in the circuit which causes erratic player movement.



Little Casino's New Voice Option, Desirée, Sweetens The Pot.

Digital Controls creates Desirée, a sultry, sexy voice that sweet talks customers as they play Little Casino I and II.

Desirée does more than just talk. She makes money. Customers' desire to hear what she'll say next encourages them to keep playing. The voice of Desirée is recorded on ROM voice memory for life-like reproduction. Seventy-five different phrases heighten player interest throughout the games.

Standard equipment on new Little Casino II, Desirée is offered as retro-fit enhancement for Little Casinos already in the field. The voice option shows Digital Controls' commitment to extend the earning capacity of its games.

DIGITAL CONTROLS

Digital Controls, Inc.
5555 Oakbrook Parkway
Norcross, Ga. 30093
(404) 441-3332/Telex #543642

Ice Cold Beer—I've gotten many service calls about the ball going into a hole and bouncing back out through a lower hole below the bar. The ball ends up on the bottom of the board, and the machine has no switches there to sense its location. Aside from adding switches and modifying the game, a simple solution is to tilt the game back, by raising the front of the cabinet, so it tilts back on a 3-5 degree angle. This should limit the chances of the ball bouncing back and reduce service calls. The angle of the game also affects its play so make sure the angle you tilt the game back at is not noticeable to players.

Galaga—When *Galaga* games work correctly, they continue to earn good money. However, there have always been problems with the games "locking up" or players being able to stay on the game too long. I have been informed by Ed Ranalli of Alpha-Omega that he has had great success in eliminating the lockup by *reducing* the power supply voltage below 5.0 to exactly 4.8 volts. The game must also have an anti-static board in it.

Many players know there is a way to play the game where none of the aliens will fire back. This may cause low collections, and you would have never suspected the real reason. I'm not going to print how to beat the game, but if you ever hear of this situation, you have a game with a program error incorporated in the ROMs. Bally will replace your four ROMs at (hopefully) little or no charge.

The last item to check is the type of sockets on your ROM board. If you have the white sockets, you may want to change them. These white sockets are probably not making good connection with the ICs, and you most likely have much down-time due to loose sockets.

Gyruss—Sam Cross of Godwin Distributing in North Little Rock, Arkansas, made a suggestion that should improve *Gyruss'* earnings. The monitor bezel cover blocks out a major portion of the screen so that onlookers cannot watch a player at the game and small children cannot see the screen very well. If you cut away about 3 inches of the bezel from the left and right interior

"Frank's Cranks" Service Tips

Name _____ **Company** _____

Address _____

Problem/Symptom _____

_____

My Solution _____

_____

_____

Return to Frank "The Crank" Seninsky, Alpha-Omega Amusement Inc., 3 Coral Street, Edison, New Jersey 08837.

Frank Seninsky and *Play Meter* are sponsoring a contest to find the best service tips for our readers. Each review will feature the two top service tips received. From the 40 chosen during the year, the authors of the best three responses (most helpful and most ingenious) will receive a free one-year subscription to *Play Meter* magazine.

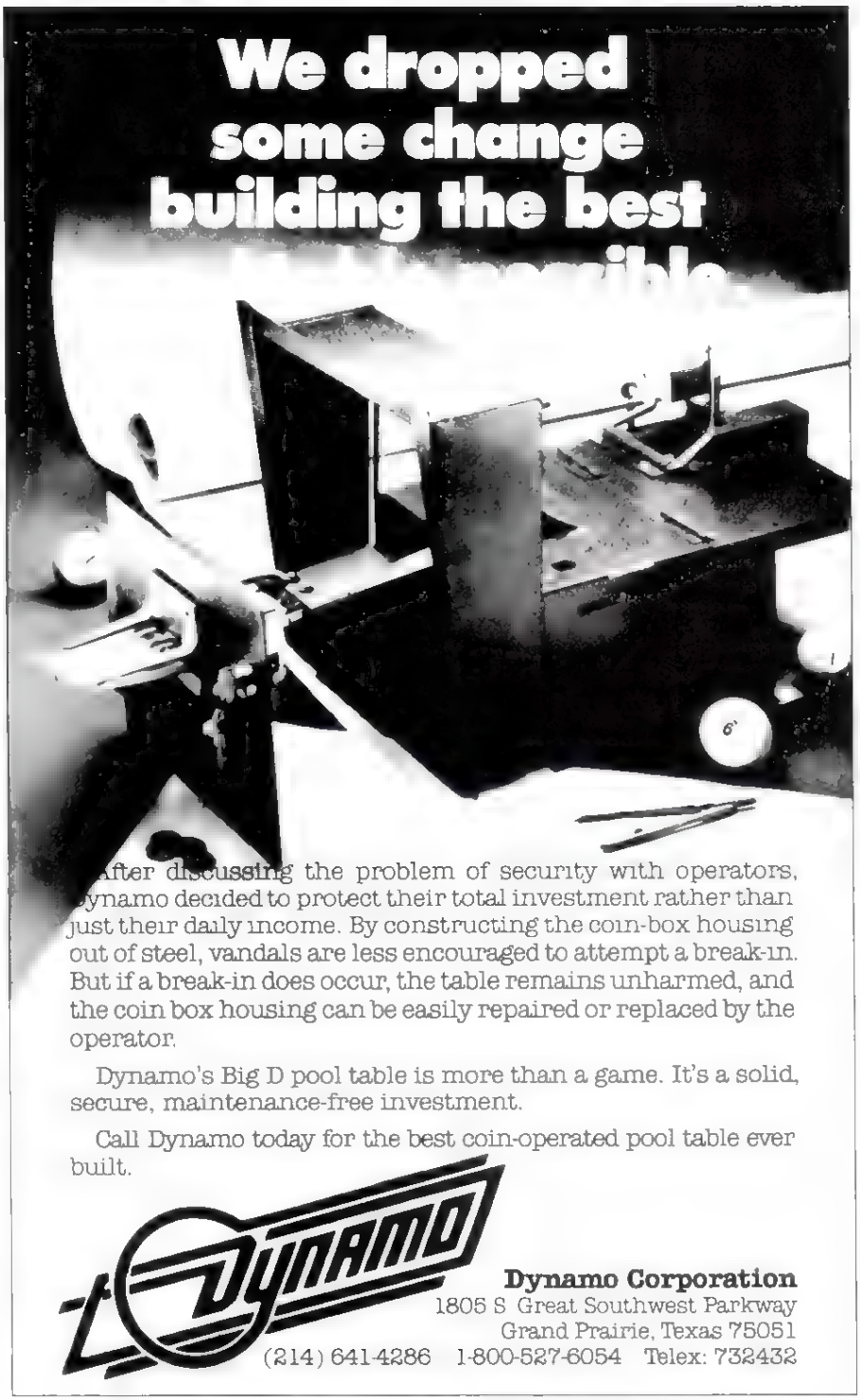
edges and 1 inch away from the bottom interior edge, the game will look much better and make more money

To get to the bezel, you will have to remove the monitor cover which is held in by special security screws These screws have heads containing just two small dot indentations Cross recommends cutting and using the inner bend of a standard paper clip as a tool to remove these screws. Centuri does not provide a tool for this purpose. I guess it figured there would never be any need to ever clean the monitor or inside cover

Don't be ashamed of any tips you have. The readers find these tips useful

If you need any more information or want to chat, you can reach me at Alpha-Omega Amusements & Sales, 3 Coral Street, Edison, NJ 08837, 201/738 1800. Who knows, maybe I can help save you some time, money, or better yet, maybe you can save *me* some of the same

As always...keep cranking! •



After discussing the problem of security with operators, Dynamo decided to protect their total investment rather than just their daily income. By constructing the coin-box housing out of steel, vandals are less encouraged to attempt a break-in. But if a break-in does occur, the table remains unharmed, and the coin box housing can be easily repaired or replaced by the operator.

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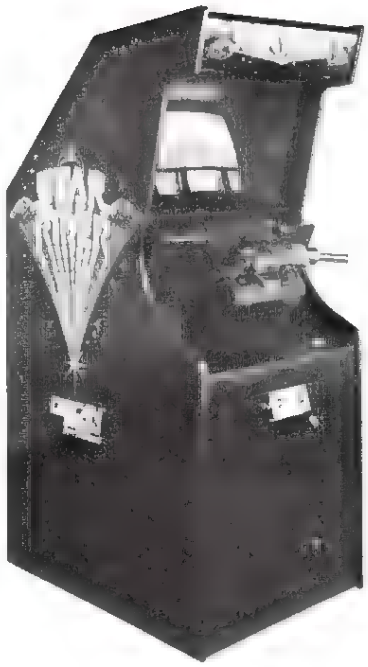
Laser race

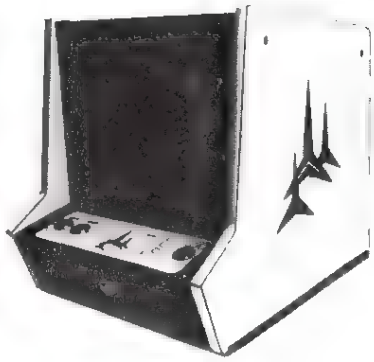
Williams Electronics' new laser disc video, *Star Rider*, is a motorcycle race through strange and faraway planets.

The power behind *Star Rider* is the Discan System which provides hardware scrolling for first-person perspective, computer-generated background images, high resolution foreground images, a three channel sound system, and an industrial disc player with modifications for system control.

On the outside, *Star Rider* takes shape as a new upright or motorcycle sit-on which has a removable front wheel and cowling. This allows *Star Rider* to be placed in limited-space locations. The cabinets are equipped with fully operational handlebars, motorcycle-type controls, and a rearview mirror.

Like Williams' other systems, Discan includes a game adjustment program and detailed bookkeeping information backed by a series of diagnostic tests.





Spirit of fun

Techstar Inc. of Miami, Florida, introduces the *Spirit Casino* countertop video game. The for amusement only game features four casino games, as well as player and operator options.

The game features draw poker, blackjack, craps, or casino (slot), and for the location operator, a location programmable billboard message mode. "The programmable message mode has three screens of message capability and five lines of 14 large characters per line, enabling the operator to advertise special hours, contests, and other attractions at his facility," said Bill Olliges, president of Techstar.

"As a for amusement only game, the machine is expected to be acceptable in all areas. There are no gray area game payout or payback features. The *Spirit Casino* has no knock-off switches or meters for credits or replays."

The convertible cabinet has a single logic board system, with a 9-inch color monitor, a three-button lit control panel, player optional music background, and built-in (automatic) self-diagnosis.

The *Spirit Casino* is available in Techstar's new CCT-1 convertible countertop model. The cabinet is designed to be convertible and can be changed to accommodate any video game printed circuit board, in horizontal or vertical viewing format.

Other operator features include a rear access double-lock cashbox system, battery backup for high score and message retention, and metal cabinet construction.

POWER SUPPLY DESIGN COURSE PSD-1

Lesson 13: I.C. Regulators

Programmed Test

Editor's Note: The material below is a serialization of the Kurz Kasch correspondence course for electronics, designed specifically for the coin-operated amusement industry. This course is copyrighted and owned by Kurz Kasch of Dayton, Ohio, and its reprinting is being sponsored jointly by Kurz Kasch and Play Meter *magazine. This material is authorized for publication exclusively in* Play Meter *magazine*

INSTRUCTIONS: *The purpose of this test is to guide you step-by-step thru actual circuit design problems. Also, many of these tests will provide you with additional design technique. Most important, these tests will provide you with a gauge to establish your degree of understanding of the material covered in the text. The test is programmed. Start at block one and then follow the numbered instruction associated with your answer.*

1

Design a power supply which will deliver 7.5V regulated with a load current of 50 to 75ma. Use the MFC4060 as the regulating element. The circuit must operate in an ambient temperature of 50°C.

What is the value of current which flows through the voltage divider?

_____ *ma* — *GO TO BLOCK 18*

2

1.1KΩ − 620Ω — *480Ω or the nearest higher standard value (500Ω).*

$V_{IO(max)}$ = _____ *V* — *GO TO BLOCK 20*

3

$R_2 = \frac{3.8V \cdot 620\Omega}{7.5V - 3.8V}$ — *636Ω*

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the value of R_2 *for* V_{ref} — *4.8V?*

R_2 _____ Ω — *GO TO BLOCK 16*

4

$10.5\ (7.5V + 3.0V) \leq V_{in} \leq (10.0V + 7.5V) - 17.5V$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the range possible in V_O *at 50 C?*

V_O = _____ *V at 50 C* — *GO TO BLOCK 17*

5

$R_2 = \frac{4.3V \times 1.5K}{7.5V} = 860\Omega$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the value of R_1*?*

R_1 _____ Ω — *GO TO BLOCK 11*

11

$R_1 = 1.5K - 0.86K = 640\Omega$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

The nearest standard value of resistor is 620Ω. We will use this for R_1*. Can the values of* R_1 *and* R_2 *be used as calculated?*

a. *YES* — *GO TO BLOCK 21*
b. *NO* — *GO TO BLOCK 31*

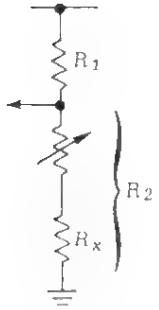
16

$R_2 = \frac{4.8V \times 620\Omega}{7.5V - 4.8V} = 1102\Omega$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

R_2 *must then be adjustable from 636Ω to 1.1K.*

The value of R_X *(refer to the diagram) is then...*



R_X = _____ Ω GO TO BLOCK 33

17

$6.75V \leq V_O \leq 8.25V$

The above is based on the stated temperature coefficient of ±3.0MV/°C.

Did you get the same result?

YES *NO*

You have completed the test for lesson thirteen of this course. And in doing so, you have completed the entire course.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Before submitting your test for credit, be sure to check if ALL questions have been answered and ALL work shown.

Also, on a separate sheet of paper write down your comments regarding the POWER SUPPLY DESIGN COURSE (PSD–1). We would like to know what you feel could have been explained better, what topics you would like to see added or deleted. Most of all, how much did you gain by the course.

18

$I_{I(max)} = \frac{75ma}{10} = 7.5ma$

$I_{I(min)} = \frac{50ma}{10} = 5.0ma$

In the problem the value of 5.0ma will be used.

Did you get the same results? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the value of R′?

R' _____ Ω GO TO BLOCK 27

20

$V_{IO(max)} = \frac{1\ watt}{75ma} = 13.3V$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the range in V_{in}?

_____ $\leq V_{in} \leq$ _____ GO TO BLOCK 32

21

YOUR CHOICE IS INCORRECT!

According to the data sheet, the manufacturer states that the value of V_{ref} will vary from 3.8V to 4.8V. We have used the 4.3V only as a center value.

Refer to the text and then return to Block 11.

27

$R' \quad \frac{7.5V}{5.0ma} \quad 1.5K\,\Omega$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the value of R_2?

R_2 = _____ Ω GO TO BLOCK 5

28

$P_{d(max)} = 1\ watt - (10MW \times 25\ C) \quad 750MW$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is the range in V_{in} at 50 C?

_____ $V \leq V_{in} \leq$ _____ V GO TO BLOCK 4

31

YOUR CHOICE IS CORRECT!

What is the value of R_2 for $V_{ref} = 3.8V$?

R_2 = _____ Ω GO TO BLOCK 3

32

$10.5V = (7.5V + 3.0V) \leq V_{in} \leq (13.3V + 7.5V) = 20.8V$

Did you get the same result? If not, **do not** *go on but refer to the text and then recheck your math.*

What is $P_{d(max)}$ at 50° C?

$P_{d(max)}$ = _____ MW at 50° C GO TO BLOCK 28

33

R_X = 636Ω or the nearest lower standard value (620Ω).

What is the value of the potentiometer?

_____Ω

GO TO BLOCK 2

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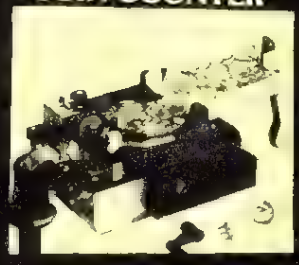

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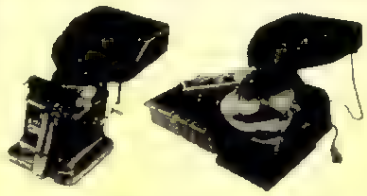

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NEWS BRIEFS (continued)

Konami has purchased 400,000 shares of Centuri stock, giving the Japanese firm 500,000 shares in the company, or about 5 percent ownership. Centuri has fielded several Konami hits in the United States, including *Time Pilot, Gyruss, Scramble, Frogger,* and the current hit *Track & Field.* New collaborations carry both companies' names on the games. Kagemasa Kozuki, president of Konami, will take a seat on the Centuri board of directors.

— — ● — —

To broaden the scope of commodities it taxes, the Japanese government is considering a tax on coin-operated amusements, according to the Japanese trade press. The government already taxes pachinko and slot machines.

— — ● — —

Mary Ann Moore has been named operations manager of Nationwide Vending Services. The Upland, California, firm was started this summer to service national vending contracts through local operators. The firm recently announced it had signed contracts with Jerrico Inc. of Lexington, Kentucky, giving Nationwide Vending locations in all 50 states, according to President Fred Pollak. Among the company's accounts are AMTRAK and T.G.I. Friday's. Nationwide Vending selects local operators throughout the country to service locations as subcontractors.

— — ● — —

Starcom Inc., the triumvirate of companies which produces *Dragon's Lair*—Bluth Group Ltd. (animation), RDI (engineering), and Cinematronics (manufacturing and marketing)—is changing its name to Magicom Inc. as it prepares to deliver its next game, *Space Ace.* According to the company, *Space Ace* will be more of an action game, playing about 50 percent faster than *Dragon's Lair.*

— — ● — —

Simon Dieth, whose father presides over Ruffler and Dieth, one of England's largest coin-op distributors, has joined the Lake Success, New York, office of R.H. Belam as wholesale equipment manager. Dieth will handle the movement of equipment between Belam and other distributors. Dieth said he is working in the United States to get a "street level" understanding of the American coin-op market.

— — ● — —

Bob Owens has been named national franchise director for Putt-Putt Golf & Games of Fayetteville, North Carolina. Owens has been with the company for several years in a variety of operations, promotions, and management positions.

— — ● — —

"Pee Wee" Fleshner has returned to the International Billiards Inc. sales staff to represent the company's products in Texas and Louisiana. Fleshner had previously been with the Houston-based company for five years.

— — ● — —

Ross Knapp has been named vice president of sales for Tech Vend Marketing, the Norcross, Georgia, manufacturer of the *Mini Clinic,* a blood pressure and heart rate monitor.

— — ● — —

A-1 Ashtray Company has changed its name to A-1 Products Company, reflecting a broadened product line which, in addition to the firm's line of ashtrays, now includes a cup and can holder, a coin box alarm, and other items. A-1's Stan Pearson said he's offering products that "would not ordinarily be sold by other distributors."

— — ● — —

Startime Video Jukeboxes will offer discs from Polygram and RCA. Video Music International,the jukebox maker, announced those contracts, as well as agreements with CBS, Atlantic, and Elektra/Asylum had recently been signed.

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Cathie Zacharias has been named manager of sales support and operations at Wico Corporation. She was formerly assistant manager of customer service at Wico.

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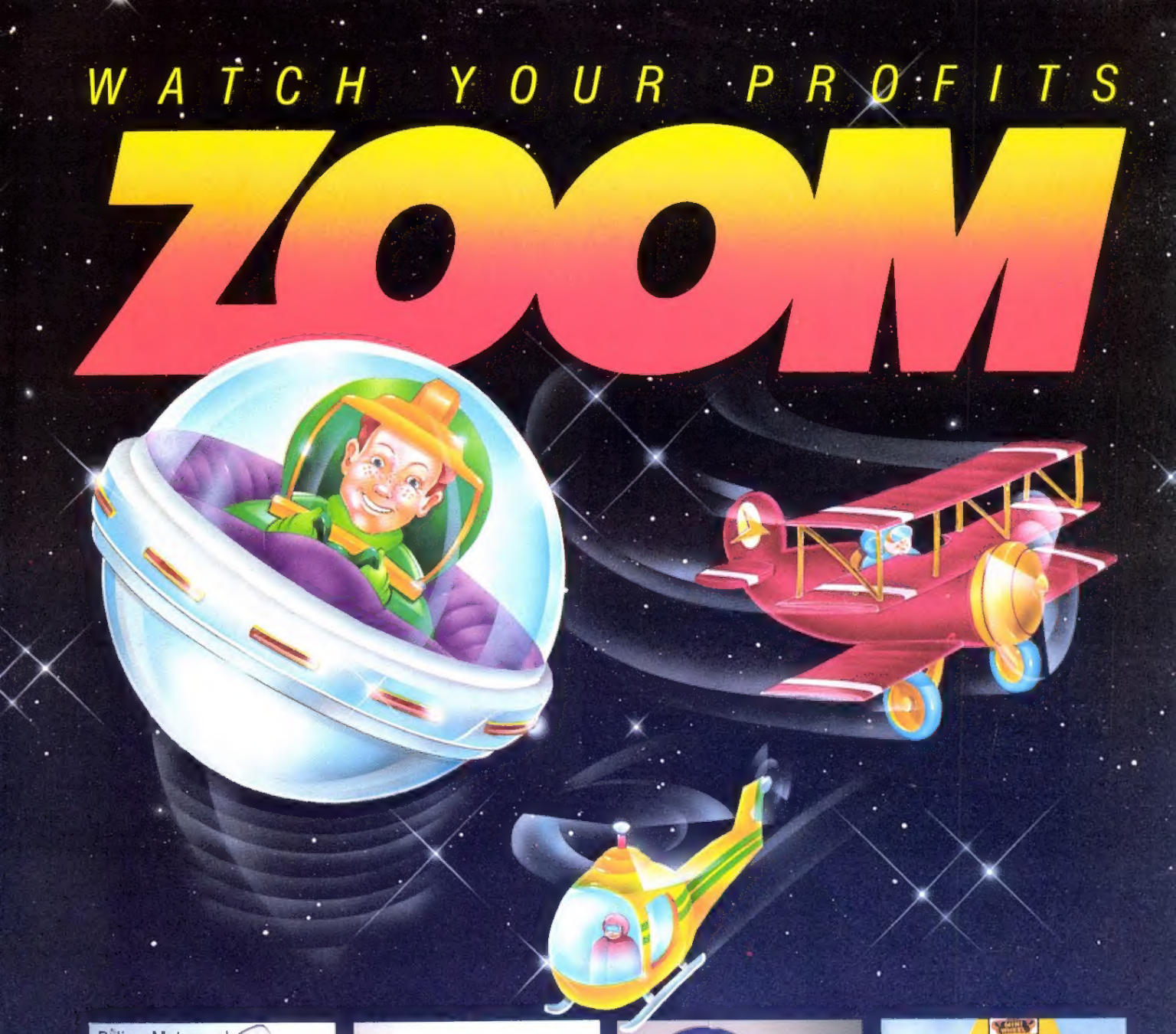

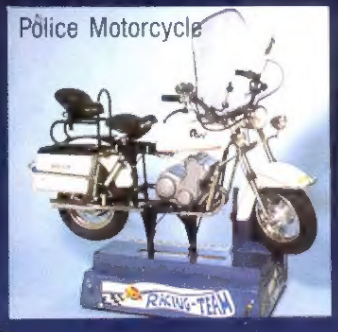
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